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JEW SÜSS

A TRAGIC COMEDY IN FIVE SCENES

by
ASHLEY DUKES

Based upon the romance of
LION FEUCHTWANGER

London
MARTIN SECKER
Number Five John Street Adelphi
1929



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NUMBER FIVE JOHN STREET ADELPHI
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CHARACTERS

KARL ALEXANDER, *afterwards Duke of Württemberg*

MARIE-AUGUSTE, *afterwards Duchess*

GENERAL REMCHINGEN, *Karl Alexander's aide-de-camp*

COUNCILLOR WEISSENSEE, *afterwards President of the Council*

MAGDALEN, *Weissensee's daughter*

AN ENGLISH LORD, *envoy to the Court of Württemberg*

JOSEF SÜSS OPPENHEIMER (*known as "Jew Süss"*)

RABBI GABRIEL OPPENHEIMER, *his uncle*

NAEMI, *his daughter*

NICOLAS, *Süss's secretary*

BINDER, *a millowner*

A RABBI, *leader of a Jewish delegation*

DEPUTY-PRESIDENT STURM, *of the Chamber of Württemberg*

DOM BARTELEMY PANCORBO, *a jewel merchant*

GRAZIELLA, *a singer*

A Physician, Courtiers, Messengers, Servants, etc.

The action passes in the Duchy of Württemberg about the year 1737.

SCENES

I : *The pump room at Wildbad.*
(Six months pass.)

II : *The audience room of Süß's house in Stuttgart.*
Morning.

III : *The ballroom of Süß's house. Evening.*
(One week passes.)

IV : *The keep of Süß's castle in the forest of Hirsau.*
(One month passes.)

V : *The throne room in the ducal castle of Ludwigsburg.*

“JEW SÜSS” was played for the first time on any stage at the Opera House, Blackpool, on July 29, 1929 ; and for the first time in London at the Duke of York’s Theatre, on September 19, 1929, with the following cast (in the order of appearance) :

GENERAL REMCHINGEN	A. BROMLEY DAVENPORT
COUNCILLOR WEISSENSEE	FELIX AYLMER
MANAGER OF THE PUMP ROOM	WALTER MENPES
KARL ALEXANDER	FRANK HARVEY
MARIE-AUGUSTE	VERONICA TURLEIGH
AN ENGLISH LORD	PHILIP DESBOROUGH
JOSEF SÜSS OPPENHEIMER	MATHESON LANG
RABBI GABRIEL	LEWIN MANNERING
A COURIER (<i>at Wildbad</i>)	ARNOLD ROOKE
NICOLAS, <i>Süss’s secretary</i>	PHILIP CUNNINGHAM
BINDER	ROBERT GATES
A RABBI, <i>leader of a delegation</i>	STANLEY HOWLETT
DEPUTY-PRESIDENT STURM	JOHN GARSIDE
MAGDALEN WEISSENSEE	JOAN MAUDE
DOM BARTELEMY PANCORBO	STANLEY HOWLETT
GRAZIELLA	MARY SHERIDAN
NAEMI	PEGGY ASHCROFT
A COURIER (<i>at Ludwigsburg</i>)	ALBERT NANSON
JOHANN	JOHN GARSIDE
VENUS AND MARS (<i>in the ballet</i>)	PEARL ARGYLE AND HAROLD TURNER

The play produced by MATHESON LANG and REGINALD DENHAM.

SCENE I

The pump room at Wildbad. In the foreground is a green table, around which are set empty chairs. In the raised background, behind a curtained archway, is a similar but smaller table, at which are seated ladies and gentlemen playing cards. Around them moves a fashionable assembly. Some lookers-on sip their glasses of the waters as they stroll.

GENERAL REMCHINGEN, *a man of fifty in uniform, comes into the empty room and paces up and down as if in impatience. Privy Councillor WEISSENSEE, a courtier of about the same age, enters by one of the doors in the foreground and watches him with a smile.*

WEISSENSEE (*sipping his glass of the waters*) : Good day to you, General. It seems you are not playing ?

GENERAL (*grimly*) : I am playing the fool, that is all. Any man plays the fool who exchanges a soldier's tent for this nest of frippery.

WEISSENSEE : Come, you must not be hard on our gay little Wildbad. Its waters are said to be good for the spleen. You should try them.

GENERAL : Thank you, Councillor, I prefer Tokay.

There is a hubbub from the background, where a dispute seems to have arisen among the players.

Damn that crowd of pimps and spongers ! What are we all doing here ?

WEISSENSEE : I am here as looker-on, for a watering-place is a mirror of the world. You are enjoying a well-earned rest from storming Balkan fortresses side by side with our brave princeling Karl Alexander. He is enjoying a honeymoon with his charming Marie-Auguste. All of them excellent reasons—eh, General ?

GENERAL : Don't imagine that I grumble at his Highness's marriage.

WEISSENSEE (*ironically*) : You are no doubt resolved to follow him through every campaign, however perilous.

GENERAL (*coming closer*) : They say you had some hand in this matchmaking. Had you not the succession in mind ?

WEISSENSEE : Come, come, need we speak of succession ? Your hero of Belgrade is twice removed from the throne.

A burst of laughter from the upper room.

I did not know gamblers could laugh so much.

GENERAL : The Jews must be among them. They are either laughing with a Jew or at him.

WEISSENSEE : Perhaps that is better than flogging him through the streets, or branding him as a sacrificer of little Christian children. At least it is more civilized.

GENERAL : I hate this fashion of hobnobbing with the Jews. One meets them everywhere.

WEISSENSEE : The world is changing, General. The Court Jew spells power, as the court fool used to

spell wisdom. But you have no reason to complain of the race. The money you blaze away on powder and shot is always borrowed from the coffers of the Oppenheimers or the Seligmanns. Clever fellows—they pay their enemies to massacre each other.

GENERAL : Well, I am glad they serve one useful turn. But let them sit in their ghettos and keep from our sight. One of these Oppenheimers, almost a Christian dandy by his looks, had the impudence to leave a bouquet of orange-blossoms for the Princess at her lodging.

WEISSENSEE : Josef Süß, doubtless. He is one of the characters of Wildbad. Outwardly, as you say, there is little of the Jew about him. Son of a strolling actor and a singer ; his mother was a beauty in her day. Her eyes won him a place at Court, and his wits have done the rest. You must take him as you take the waters. Gulp him down like a soldier, General.

GENERAL : It is you who take them, not I !

WEISSENSEE : And did you hurl his gift after him into the gutter ?

GENERAL : No, for no sooner had the fellow gone than her Highness came into the hall ; and she found it charming, if you please. Charming ! What is the reason for this plague of Jews ?

WEISSENSEE : Perhaps there are not enough Christians in the world.

Voices are heard, and double doors are thrown open.
But here are our pair of Highnesses, I think.

The portly Manager of the Pump Room enters backward, with low bows, ushering in the royal party. KARL ALEXANDER, a full-blooded soldierly figure in field-marshal's uniform, enters with MARIE-AUGUSTE, a pretty woman whose features are at once delicate and sensuous. With them are an ENGLISH LORD, diplomatic and correct, and several ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting. The players at the tables in the background have crowded forward. None of them ventures to descend the steps, and they stand huddled together in the archway, craning their necks for a glimpse of the visitors.

MANAGER (*bowing low as the party enters*) : If your Highnesses will be good enough to step this way. . . . This apartment is reserved entirely for your Highnesses' use. . . . (*He addresses the players in the room at the rear*) Ladies and gentlemen, I beg you to respect their Highnesses' privacy. . . .

He beckons to footmen to draw the curtains across the archway. KARL ALEXANDER laughs.

KARL ALEX. : Privacy—trash ! We live in a royal window, and the rabble are welcome to rub their greasy noses on the glass.

MANAGER : I can assure your Highness that only the best people are admitted to the Pump Room . . . even to the outer rooms. . . .

KARL ALEX. : The scum of the rabble, hey ? The excellent *canaille* ? Well, we are used to being stared at, as a soldier is used to fire and a pretty woman to kisses. (*To Marie-Auguste*) Eh, my dear ?

MARIE-AUGUSTE : Oh, I will not grudge any one a pleasure.

KARL ALEX. : They have seen me before, for my picture hangs in all their kitchens to be smoked between a pair of hams. This time they are taking their peep at my bride and her womenfolk. (*He looks gallantly, possessively, about him.*)

MANAGER (*at the table*) : Cards are here, in case your Highness should wish to tempt Fortune. . . .

KARL ALEX. : At a percentage to the management? Jews are not the only usurers. (*To the Englishman*) Well, Milord Englishman, will you hold a bank against me?

LORD : If your Highness pleases.

He moves to the gaming-table.

KARL ALEX. : You will join us, brother General?

GENERAL : No cards, if you please, for a soldier who lives on his pay.

MARIE-AUGUSTE : The General has promised to escort me to the concert room. Graziella is to sing.

KARL ALEX. : The deuce she is—and I shall not be there. You shall hand her a pailful of roses with my compliments. Click your heels, General, and see to it. (*To MARIE-AUGUSTE*) Well, pretty wife, so you are deserting me for a singer?

MARIE-AUGUSTE (*smilingly, coolly*) : Before your Highness has time to do as much for me.

KARL ALEX : There, Milord Englishman, you see what it means to marry a witty woman. (*To MARIE-AUGUSTE*) Be off with you, then !

MARIE-AUGUSTE (*to the ENGLISH LORD*) : Spare my husband, Milord, for he is often unlucky.

LORD (*gallantly*) : Not always, Madam !

MARIE-AUGUSTE : *Ah, l'Anglais qui trouve le mot !*
(*To REMCHINGEN*) Come, General. You love music, do you not ? The drum especially !

MARIE-AUGUSTE *goes out with the General, and*
WEISSENSEE *follows. The crowd in the upper room*
have returned to their table.

LORD (*opening a pack of cards*) : Your Highness's popularity must sometimes be embarrassing.

KARL ALEX. : Bah, the Württembergers are a stiff-necked crew. They love a soldier at a distance ; but bid them pay him a soldier's wage, and they button up their pockets. Bid them fight themselves, and they will mutiny. Their lands are too rich, Milord, their bellies are too full. They need a ruler ; but let him once rule them, and there will be the devil to pay.

LORD (*shuffling his pack*) : In that respect they are very like Englishmen and Frenchmen.

He is now seated facing KARL, and several ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting have taken the other seats.

Will your Highness cut the pack yourself ?

KARL ALEX. : No, a woman's hand will bring me luck. (*To his neighbour*) You shall cut for me, Countess.

A lady-in-waiting complies.

LORD (*dealing*) : I confess to some fear of your Highness, since the poets sing of you as Achilles.

KARL ALEX : And the Alexander of Württemberg, eh, Milord ? I stake a hundred florins for a modest beginning.

LORD (*looking at his cards*) : Two hundred.

KARL ALEX. : Shall I venture, Countess ? Five hundred.

LORD : I stand fast.

KARL ALEX. (*turning over his cards*) : You pay the table, Milord.

LORD (*paying out*) : I see with pleasure that the ladies have won too.

KARL ALEX. (*in good-humour*) : Yes, you must furnish their pin-money, and I swear their husbands will thank you for it—ha, ha ! (*To the MANAGER*) Here is a handful for that verse-maker who called me Achilles.

The MANAGER receives the money and withdraws obsequiously to the background.

LORD (*completing a new deal*) : This time I will say five hundred florins.

KARL ALEX. : Seven hundred, before I look at my cards.

LORD : A thousand, since I have looked at mine.

KARL ALEX. (*examining his hand*) : Say twelve hundred.

LORD : Fifteen hundred.

KARL ALEX : Hum ! I stand fast.

LORD (*showing his cards*) : The table pays the bank, if the ladies will pardon me.

KARL ALEX. : Well, well, our turn will come again.

During the foregoing JOSEF SÜSS OPPENHEIMER has appeared at the table in the inner room, among the company who are watching the players.

SÜSS is a man in the forties, elegantly dressed, with lace ruffles, embroidered stockings, buckled shoes, and a peruke.

His attention seems to have been arrested by the game in the foreground in which KARL ALEXANDER and the ENGLISH LORD are engaged. The Englishman is completing a new deal.

LORD : This time I will draw at a venture. Let us say a thousand florins.

KARL ALEX. (*without hesitation*) : Two thousand.

A murmur goes round the table. The Englishman inspects his cards.

LORD : Five thousand.

Another murmur. Süß has a foot upon the steps.

KARL ALEX. (*rather shortly*) : You play high, Milord. You know I cannot double that.

LORD : Your Highness stands fast ?

KARL ALEX. : I do.

LORD (*consulting his cards again*) : But the banker, I think, has the privilege of doubling every stake.

KARL ALEX. : Once only in the evening.

LORD : It will be now.

KARL ALEX. : That makes ten thousand, then. *Mille tonnerres*, you are a bold fellow. Show your cards.

LORD (*showing them*) : The table pays the bank.
I apologize to the ladies.

KARL ALEX. (*counting out money*) : Five, six, seven.
. . . Ten thousand is more than I can muster.

LORD : Your Highness's voucher will of course be accepted.

KARL ALEX. (*nettled*) : I hope my word will suffice.

There is a pause of embarrassment. The Englishman sits motionless and silent.

Very well, we must bow to the banker's privilege and end the game. Bring me a pen !

The Manager is about to comply, but Süß has come forward alone, and stands behind Karl Alexander's chair, offering his purse.

Süß : Perhaps your Highness will do me the honour to draw upon my purse ?

KARL ALEX. (*turning upon him with astonishment*) :
Oho ! And who in the devil's name may you be ?

Süß : Josef Süß Oppenheimer, at your service.

KARL ALEX. : One of the Viennese Oppenheimers ? (*Sneering*) My faithful usurers, who never fail to present their quarterly account ?

Süß : I leave it to my relatives to claim relationships.

KARL ALEX. : Was it not you who sent a bunch of orange-blossoms to her Highness the other morning ?

Süß : I made so bold as to welcome her to Wildbad.

KARL ALEX. : Do you know, Jew, that you might have had a beating from me for that gift ?

SÜSS : Among those who have received a beating from your Highness, I should have been in excellent company.

Laughter at the table.

KARL ALEX. : The fellow trims his words as though he had made his bow at Versailles !

A LADY : Oh, he has been there, your Highness !

KARL ALEX. : The devil he has !

SÜSS : The Marshal of France, who is one of your Highness's victims, never fails to speak of you with respect.

KARL ALEX. (*well pleased*) : Hum ! I like the pattern of your stockings, Jew. I must order such a pair.

SÜSS : Your Highness will permit me to send you a dozen.

Renewed laughter at the table.

KARL ALEX. : I vow the man is a haberdasher as well ! (*To Süss*) But if you must lose your money, why do you not play yourself ?

SÜSS : I am no gambler, but I know that luck is an attribute of men.

KARL ALEX. : And so you wish to back my fortune ?

SÜSS : If your Highness will graciously consent.

KARL ALEX. : On your own head be it. (*Weighing the purse in his hand*) How much is here ?

SÜSS (*with a shrug*) : A matter of twenty thousand florins.

KARL ALEX. : It shall be ventured on one deal.
(*To the Englishman*) Provided you agree, Milord?

LORD : I agree.

KARL ALEX. (*throwing Süß's purse on the table*) :
There is my stake.

LORD (*placing money before him*) : And mine.

There is silence while the Englishman deals. KARL
ALEXANDER turns to Süß.

KARL ALEX. : If you fail me, Jew, I swear you shall have a ducking in unholy water. (*Laughter at the table.*) And now let us see what luck the rogue has brought me.

He turns over his cards. There is a murmur at the table. The Englishman inspects them, and then shows his own.

LORD (*politely*) : I see that your Highness will need this implement. (*He hands over the banker's rake.*)

KARL ALEX. : You are a generous loser, Milord.

The Englishman rises.

LORD : The banker's seat is at your Highness's disposal. My revenge must wait until another evening.

KARL ALEX. : *Au revoir*, Milord. (*Raking in a pile of gold and with it Süß's purse*) First of all, Jew, here is your capital without a farthing's interest. That must be a new experience for you, eh?

Süß : My interest is your Highness's notice.

KARL ALEX. : And your own escape from a ducking ; remember that !

SÜSS (*impassive*) : Your Highness drove a Christian bargain.

KARL ALEX. : Hum ! Next we must compensate the ladies who lost with me. (*He distributes several small piles of money.*) *Au revoir*, ladies, *au revoir*. You may thank this Jew here for your good luck, but let him not presume upon the service. Such fellows must be kept in their place.

The ladies have crowded around Süß, while the gentlemen bow themselves out.

I said—let him not presume !

The ladies disperse and withdraw. SÜSS and KARL ALEXANDER are now alone together.

Well, Jew, are you waiting for leave to go ?

SÜSS : I am seeking audience of your Highness.

KARL ALEX. : Here ?

SÜSS : With your permission, I will ensure a greater privacy.

He makes a sign to footmen in the upper room, and they draw the curtains. KARL ALEXANDER watches with raised eyebrows.

KARL ALEX. : I see that you make yourself at home in our Pump Room.

SÜSS : Your Highness will pardon me. It was I who ordered the tables for the management.

KARL ALEX. : And you who have done such execution among the pretty women of Wildbad ? You see I know your reputation already.

SÜSS : My exploits are trifling beside those of your Highness.

KARL ALEX. : They say you filled the coffers of the Palatinate by your stamp tax and your silver coinage.

SÜSS : Those were unfledged adventures in money-making. A grown bird flies at higher game.

KARL ALEX. : If you are so ambitious, what is your interest in a poor cousin like myself?

SÜSS : Your Highness may not always be a poor cousin.

KARL ALEX. : Will you raise me a mortgage on the throne of Württemberg? You shall have my reversion for the trifle in that purse of yours.

SÜSS : *I would not value your chances so lightly.*

KARL ALEX. : What, a Catholic duke of a Protestant duchy ! Not even a Jew can reconcile them.

SÜSS : None but a Jew, perhaps. But your Highness's present fame is worth even more than your future prospects.

KARL ALEX. : A mortgage on the hero's popularity ! And how will you raise it for me ?

SÜSS : For instance, by a lottery with your portrait on every ticket.

KARL ALEX. : A lottery ?

SÜSS : I believe that Parliament was unwilling to increase your Highness's allowance ?

KARL ALEX. : Yes. Curse them for a pack of canting screws !

SÜSS : But the people will pay, and gladly. Gold and silver will stream from their hearthstones, if the prizes are high enough.

KARL ALEX. : *Mille tonnerres*, that is a scheme !
By Mars and Jupiter, here is a man with a headpiece
at last !

MARIE-AUGUSTE *returns with the GENERAL and*
WEISSENSEE.

My dear, this is the greatest rogue in the Palatinate,
who will now be the greatest benefactor in Württem-
berg. He will make me rich before the year is out.

MARIE-AUGUSTE : Does he possess the philosopher's
stone, then ?

SÜSS : Madam, gold is easier won than beauty.

MARIE-AUGUSTE : Oh, I believe you are a judge of
both !

KARL ALEX. : You had better kiss her hand, Jew,
for it will have the spending of the money.

MARIE-AUGUSTE : A great part of it, at any rate.

SÜSS salutes her respectfully.

So you are to be our Court Jew ? That is amusing.

KARL ALEX. : He is to promote a public lottery
for the victor of Belgrade. Why did I never think of
it myself ? Or you, brother General ? Or you,
Councillor ? I present to you Josef Süß Oppen-
heimer, pilot of my fortunes.

*The GENERAL grunts, but WEISSENSEE offers his
hand.*

WEISSENSEE : We know each other already, I
think.

SÜSS : Councillor Weissensee's recollection honours
me.

KARL ALEX. (*at the table*) : Let me not forget the first-fruits of his guidance.

MARIE-AUGUSTE (*open-eyed*) : So much ? I shall confiscate my share immediately.

SÜSS (*helping her to rake in the gold*) : May I for once be treasurer to your Highness ?

KARL ALEX. : And now, Jew, *au revoir*. We may meet again before the evening is out.

SÜSS : I kiss your Highness's hand, and your lady's.

KARL ALEXANDER and MARIE-AUGUSTE *go out*.

GENERAL REMCHINGEN *looks Süß up and down, snorts, and stumps after them*. WEISSENSEE *lingers with an amused, tolerant smile*.

WEISSENSEE : There is room for a pilot of our little craft, if he does not quarrel with the crew.

Süß : You will find me a discreet shipmate.

WEISSENSEE : I am sure of it.

He follows the others. Süß remains alone, and his features seem to relax in satisfaction. He takes up a dice-box from the gaming-table and throws dice softly to himself, chuckling a little at the throws as they turn up. Meanwhile the curtains at the back move slowly, and there appears between them a strange Jewish figure, slightly stooping, dressed in clothes of old-fashioned Dutch cut.

RABBI GABRIEL (*before entering*) : Reb Josef Süß !

Süß : Rabbi Gabriel—uncle ! You ! Here ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Why should I not be here ? Am I not your conscience, Josef ? Did you not summon me ?

Süss : I—summon you ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Is all your assurance fled when you look into my eyes ? Have you forgotten that you left your daughter to my charge ? We were in Holland when your letter came, asking me to bring you news of her.

Süss : Have you brought Naemi with you ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Calm yourself ; she is not in this place. I have her in safe keeping—but you promised to make a home for her.

Süss (*haltingly*) : That is true. But I travel much ; I have affairs of State to settle. For the moment it is better she should learn from you. . . .

RABBI GABRIEL : Yes, it is better she should learn from me. The child makes herself a father from what I tell her of you. I sing your praises, Reb Josef Süß ; I bless you when you should be cursed. But is it well that there should be so little likeness between my tale and the truth—between her image of you and the reality ? One day she must see you as I see you—standing greedy to devour the world of pomp. Therefore I shall bring her with me into this country where you are.

Süss : Great God, no—you must not do that !

RABBI GABRIEL : And why not ? Are not all lands one to our people ? Are not all places one to the eye of understanding ? She must see and know.

Süss : Is that why you have brought her, Rabbi Gabriel ?

RABBI GABRIEL : That is why I have brought her, Reb Josef Süß.

He is about to withdraw behind the curtains.

SÜß : But stay ! Uncle, if I——

KARL ALEXANDER *returns.*

KARL ALEX. (*to Süß*) : Ah, Jew—but what visitor is this ? (*Staring at RABBI GABRIEL*) Has our Pump Room become a synagogue to-night ?

Süß : Highness, allow me to present a relative of mine. Uncle, this is his Highness Karl Alexander, Prince of Württemberg, Field-Marshal of the Empire, and my gracious master and patron.

RABBI GABRIEL *bows in silence.*

KARL ALEX. : So you are the stranger of whom the town is talking ? I swear I took you for a player from a Pump Room comedy. They say you are a magician and an alchemist. Can you not make gold ?

RABBI GABRIEL : I cannot make gold.

KARL ALEX. : Then you are not so clever as your nephew here. But I see from your eyes that you are a sorcerer. Come, you shall tell a soldier's fortune. You shall read my hand for me. (*He thrusts his hand before the other, palm upward.*) Well, what do you see ?

RABBI GABRIEL (*with averted eyes*) : It is better that I should not read.

KARL ALEX. : Oho, I know those wizard's tricks ! Come, tell me what is written here !

RABBI GABRIEL : I do not wish to speak.

KARL ALEX. : Why, man, do you think I shall

swoon at your prophecies? Tell me what you see, old Jew!

RABBI GABRIEL (*as if struggling with himself*): I beg you—do not ask again!

KARL ALEX.: And I command—tell me!

RABBI GABRIEL (*after a silence*): First of all I see—a ducal crown.

KARL ALEXANDER *laughs harshly, in amazement.*

KARL ALEX.: *Mille tonnerres*, there are no half measures in your magic! No mere fame and glory and the like, but a downright ducal crown! I think my cousin the Duke should have you flogged for such croakings. (*To Süß*) Eh, Jew? (*To RABBI GABRIEL*). And what beside?

RABBI GABRIEL: More than that I will not tell you.

KARL ALEX.: But you see more. You said “First of all.” What do you see beside?

RABBI GABRIEL: I will not tell you.

KARL ALEX.: Do you know I have smelt more powder in my day than you have garlic? What if I command again?

RABBI GABRIEL: I will not tell you.

He opens the curtains behind him and is gone.

KARL ALEX.: Your uncle makes no ceremony of his leave-taking.

SÜß: Your Highness will forgive him his manners, since he told your fortune so hopefully.

KARL ALEX.: But the part he would not tell—what of that?

SÜSS : My uncle despises the crown that is your real fortune. What seems to him a misfortune may be nothing but a dream to waking eyes.

KARL ALEX. : A ducal crown ! He must be a sharp-eyed wizard to see that, with my fat cousin and a Crown Prince in between ! (*He claps Süß on the shoulder.*) But *you* were ready to risk a purse on me, hey ?

SÜSS (*suddenly grave*) : I stake my fortune and my life upon your Highness.

KARL ALEX. : Enough of this witchcraft ! I had an errand for you—what was it ? Yes, the little actress—Kosel—you know her—begs me for a pair of slippers set with turquoises, in the Venetian style. Get them for her, Jew—but see that the bill is not too large !

SÜSS : Happily her foot is small. (*They laugh softly together.*) And now will your Highness permit me to withdraw ?

KARL ALEX. : You may go, Jew. But backward—since a crown is promised—backward !

Süß is bowing himself out when GENERAL REMCHINGEN enters, out of breath, followed by WEISSENSEE.

GENERAL : There is a courier for your Highness. He has ridden from Stuttgart without changing horse.

KARL ALEX. : Bring me his despatch.

GENERAL : He is at the door.

KARL ALEX. : Admit him, then.

*The GENERAL admits the COURIER, who hands
KARL ALEXANDER a sealed despatch.*

COURIER : For your Highness's hand.

KARL ALEX. (*reading*) : The Crown Prince died
this morning from a hunting fall. The Duke is
prostrate. I am to hold myself in readiness. . . .
(*To the COURIER*) How long have you been on the
road ?

COURIER : Five hours, Highness.

KARL ALEX. (*staring before him*) : It seems the
sorcerers lose little time.

GENERAL : And the Jews less.

*All turn to SÜSS, who stands bowing deeply to KARL
ALEXANDER.*

CURTAIN

SCENE II

SCENE : *The audience room of Süß's house in Stuttgart, a few months later. SÜß's SECRETARY is standing at a desk arranging papers, when a FOOTMAN in wine-red livery enters, announcing a visitor.*

FOOTMAN : The Councillor Weissensee.

WEISSENSEE (*entering*) : I elbowed my way through your ante-room. Tell me, why is the royal carriage in waiting below ?

SECRETARY : His excellency the Court Treasurer is honoured this morning by a visit from the Duchess. They are now inspecting the house.

WEISSENSEE : So the Duchess takes a peep at the Court Jew's palace ? I wonder she has resisted the temptation so long. Our Treasurer's treasure-house—he is artist and statesman in one. And is the famous painted bedchamber on view, with Leda and her swan ?

SECRETARY (*discreetly*) : Her Highness will doubtless admire it. I cannot speak for General Remchingen, who is in attendance.

WEISSENSEE : Our poor General ! He has been man-of-all-work since the Duke came to the throne. This visit must be gall and wormwood to him. (*Approaching*) But a word with you, my good Nicolas. My daughter Magdalen is with me, at his Excellency's

request. Perhaps your ante-room is not the happiest place for a highly-strung girl. I beg you to stow her safely away for the present.

SECRETARY : With pleasure, Councillor.

The SECRETARY goes out, and WEISSENSEE remains alone. SÜSS enters, ushering in the DUCHESS and GENERAL REMCHINGEN.

SÜSS : And now your Royal Highness returns to the scene of my labours. Good morning to you, Councillor.

WEISSENSEE (*kissing the DUCHESS's hand*) : It seems your Highness has made a voyage of discovery ?

DUCHESS : I have seen all that our Treasurer would show me.

SÜSS (*smiling*) : I protest, Madam, there has been no concealment.

DUCHESS : Very little, I confess. We even visited the bedchamber, which was discreetly empty, though I gave no warning of my visit. We admired the tapestries and the mirrors. And the General's nose was very nearly tweaked by the parrot in the golden cage.

The GENERAL snorts with suppressed fury.

I think he is a wicked Jewish parrot who cannot abide the true faith.

SÜSS : When a Jewish friend of mine was here the other day, he saw nothing but that bird. " Why the parrot, Süß ? " he asked. " What does a Jew want with a parrot ? "

WEISSENSEE : Perhaps the cage may be the answer.

GENERAL : Ha, ha, very good !

DUCHESS : The house is all very fine and beautiful, Jew, but there is one room you have not shown me.

SÜSS : Which is that, Highness ?

DUCHESS (*with her lazy smile*) : The room where the little Christian children are sacrificed.

GENERAL (*snorting satisfaction*) : Ha, ha, capital !

DUCHESS : Or are there no sacrifices nowadays ? Can such quaint customs fall into disuse ?

SÜSS (*after an instant, impassive*) : Now I will attend your Royal Highness to your carriage. There is a private stairway on this side.

He holds a door open.

DUCHESS : We are dismissed for our naughtiness, General. I must give a lump of sugar to the Jew's famous mare, and hope her master will forgive me. We must not vex our Treasurer, must we ?

Still laughing, she goes out with the GENERAL.

SÜSS accompanies them, and WEISSENSEE remains.

There is a hubbub in the ante-chamber, and BINDER, a man of fifty in country dress, forces his way in struggling with the SECRETARY, who is trying to restrain him.

BINDER : Let me pass ! I tell you I must see him ! I have nothing more to lose !

WEISSENSEE (*with amusement, observing him through a glass*) : And pray, who is this rustic visitor ?

BINDER : Binder is my name. Binder, of Settenfels. Where—where is his Excellency ?

SÜSS returns, and quickly closes the door behind him.

SÜSS : What is the meaning of this uproar ?

BINDER (*bowing abruptly*) : Binder, at your Excellency's service. Binder, of Settenfels, millowner. A plain man, Excellency.

SÜSS : What do you want of me ?

BINDER : Justice, Excellency ! Your tax-gatherers have the law of me. They say I hoarded wheat against a rising market. They can prove nothing, but they threaten all the more. They tell me I must pay two thousand florins or go before a commission of inquiry.

SÜSS (*to WEISSENSEE, blandly*) : Forgive this interruption, Councillor. (*To BINDER*) If your conscience is clear, why should you fear inquiry ?

BINDER : All the duchy fears it ! Those courts have a bad name, Excellency. What chance has a plain man against them ?

SÜSS : You must ask such questions in the proper quarter.

BINDER : Every one knows the taxes are your Excellency's affair !

SÜSS : Listen, my man. The Württembergers are slow taxpayers, who argue over every farthing. It is well that the processes of justiceshould be shortened, and the costs diminished. I counsel you to pay your dues and be thankful that no commission sits upon you.

BINDER (*excitedly*) : That is hush-money ! Hush-money !

SÜSS (*to WEISSENSEE, blandly*) : Is he not becoming

insolent? It seems to me he is becoming insolent.
(*To the SECRETARY*) Nicolas, remove this man.

BINDER (*suddenly cringing*): I humbly beg your Excellency. . . . Will your Excellency be good enough to think of me again?

SÜSS: Hardly, my good man, hardly.

BINDER: But your Excellency——

He is led out.

WEISSENSEE (*drily*): I see that your revenue system is working well.

SÜSS: Well enough. But it is the Patronage Bureau, Councillor, that interests you more especially.

WEISSENSEE: That interests—*me*?

SÜSS: I think you covet the vacant post of President of the Council.

WEISSENSEE: I understood that it was promised me.

SÜSS: Let us not speak of promises, if you please. Our hopes are often disappointed.

WEISSENSEE: You mean that your Excellency gives nothing for nothing?

SÜSS: Do the Christians give more? I fulfil every agreement to the letter.

WEISSENSEE (*with a shrug*): Very well. What are the conditions you propose?

SÜSS (*after an instant*): Tell me, Councillor, have you brought your daughter Magdalen with you?

WEISSENSEE: She is here. I confess I was surprised by your request that she should accompany me.

SÜSS: Because she called me the Devil when last we met?

WEISSENSEE (*in astonishment*) : She called you—— ?

SÜSS : I was walking in the forest—no matter where—near a small property that I possess. Yes, Councillor, I walk sometimes in the forest, though you may not guess it from these surroundings. There was a beautiful girl, no country girl, book in hand, under a tree in a clearing. I came upon her suddenly. She stared at me and cried “ The Devil ! The Devil in the wood ! ” and ran away. Was she not your daughter, Councillor ?

WEISSENSEE (*confused*) : I must beg your Excellency to excuse her. Magdalen is nervous—impressionable——

SÜSS : Ah ! She is impressionable ?

WEISSENSEE : For a time she had strange fancies, like many young girls. I assure you she has outgrown them——

SÜSS : Pray do not apologize for her, Councillor. Believe me, the encounter only deepened my interest in the young lady. There are many who think me the Devil, but few who say so—at least in my hearing.

WEISSENSEE : And why is my daughter summoned to visit you ?

SÜSS (*deliberately*) : Your daughter is also fortunate enough to interest another personage.

WEISSENSEE (*as if struck a sudden blow*) : The Duke ?

SÜSS : To-night I give a ball in this house in honour of their Highnesses. You and your daughter will of course be present. I need not say what pleasure that will give his Highness.

WEISSENSEE : And this morning ?

SÜSS : You may safely leave her to my charge, and call for her in an hour.

WEISSENSEE : Until then—am I dismissed ?

SÜSS : Your appointment to the Presidency will be made to-morrow morning. We understand each other, do we not ?

WEISSENSEE (*after a silence*) : I wish your Excellency good day.

SÜSS (*busyng himself with papers*) : Good day to you, Councillor.

WEISSENSEE *goes out.* SÜSS *rings, and the SECRETARY appears.*

Who is in waiting ?

SECRETARY : The Parliamentary Committee.

SÜSS : They shall cool their heels a little longer. Who else ?

SECRETARY : A delegation from the Jewish community of Frankfurt.

SÜSS : Show them in.

SECRETARY : I would point out to your Excellency that the Parliamentary Committee has right of precedence. . . .

SÜSS : Do you govern the affairs of this duchy, or do I ?

The SECRETARY goes out and returns immediately with the delegation, a Rabbi and two other Jews. The younger pair look eagerly about them, spreading their hands in astonishment at Süß's magnificence.

RABBI : You know us, Reb Josef Süß ?

SÜSS : What is your business with me ?

RABBI : Reb Jecheskel Seligmann of Esslingen lies imprisoned under a heavy charge. Witness against him is a Gentile owing him much money. Reb Jecheskel, he declares, slew a man child in Endorf village for the feast of Passover. Reb Jecheskel has been put to the torture already, but will not confess. Do you know of this matter ?

SÜSS : I know of it.

RABBI : You understand our laws and customs, Reb Josef Süß ; therefore you know this charge to be base and groundless. We have joined together and offered great ransom, but our labours bear no fruit. For the rulers of Esslingen are stubborn oppressors of our people. They are resolved to vex you, Reb Josef Süß, because of your power in this land. The malice of Edom is risen up against Israel.

SÜSS : Esslingen is a free Imperial city, that is to say exempt from the laws of the duchy.

RABBI : Reb Jecheskel is a citizen of Württemberg. Let the Duke demand that he be delivered up and tried by Württemberger law.

SÜSS : The case is not so simple. We are too often at variance with the free cities. Esslingen will appeal to Vienna. The Parliament will meddle too, and they will see my hand in the affair.

RABBI : How many in Israel would give their all to stay the shedding of this innocent blood ! You can avert it by one stroke, Reb Josef Süß. Shall a Jew like yourself be put to death for no other crime but

his Jewry ? My old heart stops beating to think that I am powerless in this matter. But you are powerful ; will you dare to shrug your shoulders and pass by ? Twice in every week, this month past, all Israel has fasted and prayed that such a calamity shall not befall. We come to you since God has raised you high above other men. He has made your Prince's heart as wax in your hands. Will you harden your own against your brothers' supplications ?

SÜSS : I have more to consider than the fate of any single man.

RABBI (*vehemently*) : Your pride and your power ! Are those what you consider, Reb Josef Süß ?

SÜSS : Old man, I do not wish to bandy words with you. We shall not understand each other.

RABBI : Then you refuse our petition ?

SÜSS : I will reflect upon it ; I promise no more.

RABBI : God grant that you may reflect well !

He goes out with his companions. Süß, seated at his desk, summons his SECRETARY.

SÜSS : Take your pen, Nicolas, and write.

SECRETARY (*protesting*) : The Parliamentary Committee——

SÜSS : Write, Nicolas, write. “To his Lordship the Chancellor of Esslingen.” (*With deliberation*) “The free city of Esslingen having prosecuted the Jew Jecheskel Seligmann, and the said Jew being a subject of Württemberg, the duchy requires his surrender within ten days——”

SECRETARY (*looking up*) : Excellency !

Süss (*as before*) : “—requires his surrender within ten days, in order that he may be tried by the ducal Courts of Württemberg.” Let that be signed and sealed. And now, fetch me your elected rulers of the people.

The SECRETARY goes out, and returns immediately announcing :

SECRETARY : Deputy-President Sturm, of the Chamber. The burgomasters of Stuttgart, Kanstatt and Pforzheim.

The gentlemen enter, and the SECRETARY offers them seats.

Süss : I gather, gentlemen, you have come to protest against the new Army ordinance permitting religious equality ?

DEPUTY-PRES. : Unless it be withdrawn, we shall refuse to vote a farthing for the upkeep of the Army !

Süss : And what if we are content with what has already been voted by the Privy Council ?

DEPUTY-PRES. : Do you call that rump a Council ? It is nothing but your tool, your regiment ! And we, the people's deputies, are pawns and ciphers !

Süss (*ironically*) : I cannot congratulate you on your flights of fancy. Let us keep to the facts, if you please. I am Court Treasurer, and my department is finance.

DEPUTY-PRES. : It seems you think any man a dreamer who sees more than a commodity in a country and its people. But behind your register of figures is a land—do you never think of that ?—earth

and houses, yellow acres and green forests, red roofs that shelter flesh and blood ! Stout hearts are there, strong arms are there ; and when you snatch their savings and conscribe their sons, you stir a living spirit that may sweep away——

A FOOTMAN enters in haste.

FOOTMAN : His Highness the Duke.

Doors are thrown open, and the DUKE enters.

DUKE : Good morning, Süß. I am hungry from parade. But you have visitors, I see. *Tiens, tiens !* Are these not my quarrelsome Parliament men ?

DEPUTY-PRES. (*bowing stiffly*) : Deputy-President Sturm, at your Highness's service.

DUKE (*throwing himself into a chair*) : At my service ? I hear of strange services rendered me by my loyal deputies. What is this ? Another protest against my Army regulations ? Do I command my soldiers, or do you ?

DEPUTY-PRES. (*mastering himself with an effort*) : My lord Duke, your people's deputies are seldom able to speak with you face to face. Too many strangers stand between us, too many slanderers. . . . We are ready to vote the new taxes that your Highness demands, but we beg you to withdraw the Army ordinance.

DUKE (*to Süß, indicating the gentlemen with his riding-whip*) : There you see my loyal subjects ! Do they not drive a harder bargain than any Jew ? (*Turning to them*) Listen to me, you stubborn pack ! When first I came to the throne you crowed like pullets in

the streets and ate from my hand. Have I changed since then ?

DEPUTY-PRES. : Your advisers have changed, my lord Duke. Now your Jew there stands between us !

DUKE : So that way runs the hare ? I am to send away my Jew, so that no one may keep an eye upon *your* knaveries ? Oh, I have not so short a memory, gentlemen ! Who helped me when I was an under-paid princeling at Belgrade—you or the Jew ? Who nibbled like rats at my privileges before I took the oath ?

DEPUTY-PRES. (*hotly*) : My lord Duke, we too have our rights——

DUKE : Silence, while I speak ! If my Jew had always stood beside me, you would not be yelping of your rights to-day ! What if I tear them up altogether, these precious rights of yours ? What if I make a target of them for my halberdiers ? What if I bring up a battery of cannon, and shoot them cross-wise ?

DEPUTY-PRES. : Then, my lord Duke—— ! (*Controlling himself*) But it is better we should take our leave.

DUKE (*furious*) : Go, then ! To the devil with you !

The deputies go out. He calls after them.

Canaille ! Rebellious scum !

Red in the face and panting he throws himself into a chair. Süss comes forward quietly with a glass.

Süss : May I offer your Highness a glass of Tokay ?

DUKE (*accepting it*) : God knows I mean no harm to my people, and yet they growl at me "The Jesuit! The Despot!" (*He drinks.*) Yours is a good Tokay. These oafs, these muttons! Only a soldier's eye can see the map aright. God, if I were only in the field again—in the tent, in the saddle, before the enemy! (*He sets down his glass.*)

SÜSS (*filling it again*) : And is your Highness resolved to impose the Army ordinance, nevertheless?

DUKE : Not so curious, Jew, not so curious! What does it matter to you whether my soldiers are Catholics or Lutherans? Or do you see a profit in the deal? Have you an eye on the contract for rosaries, hey?

He laughs immoderately.

SÜSS (*taking no offence*) : Your Highness knows I never meddle in affairs of religion; but this proposal opens wider issues. When the time comes, I feel sure your Highness will admit me to your confidence.

DUKE : We must not tear up our Constitution without consulting our Jew, hey?

SÜSS : That is all I ask.

DUKE : Hum! Well, we shall see. (*Rising*) And now to the Castle.

SÜSS (*carelessly*) : I have a visitor who may interest your Highness.

DUKE : Eh? A petticoat, I wager?

SÜSS : The Councillor's daughter, of whom you spoke to me the other day. You asked me to arrange a meeting with her.

DUKE : Magdalen ? Fetch her out, Jew, fetch her out ! I know you for a sweet-tooth, who nibbles first at all my dainties. As an old soldier, I am none too squeamish. And yet I would not have your leavings, at least not this time—understand me ?

Süss : Your Highness may set your mind at rest. I have met the demoiselle only once, and then she called me the Devil.

DUKE : The girl is no fool, then. Well, let us look at her.

Süss : I think she likes you no better, as yet. If your Highness will withdraw for a moment I will send for her.

DUKE (*about to comply*) : And I shall keep an eye on you, Jew—so none of your mischief !

Süss : Your Highness has nothing to fear.

DUKE : We shall see !

He withdraws behind the curtains. Süss calls to his

SECRETARY.

Süss : The demoiselle Magdalen Weissensee !

The SECRETARY goes out, and returns announcing :

SECRETARY : The demoiselle Magdalen Weissensee !

MAGDALEN, a girl of twenty, comes in. Süss remains in the background near the curtains for a moment. She looks about her, sees him, and seems to be shaken by sudden fear. As he comes to her she sinks backward on to a couch.

Süss (*staring at her*) : Why, what is this ? What ails you, child ?

The DUKE looks out through the curtains.

DUKE : *Mille tonnerres*, Jew, you have a baleful eye ! One peep at you, and the wenches swoon away !

SÜSS *pays no heed to him, but claps his hands. The*

DUKE *disappears, and the SECRETARY enters.*

SÜSS : Water ! Smelling salts !

The SECRETARY hastens to bring them. Süß bends over the girl's prostrate form.

DUKE (*putting out his head again*) : None of your tricks, remember ! (*He vanishes for an instant, but reappears.*) No nibbling, Jew, no nibbling !

His head disappears as the SECRETARY aids Süß to revive MAGDALEN. She opens her eyes and sees Süß standing before her.

SÜSS (*to the SECRETARY*) : Leave us ! (*The SECRETARY goes out.*) So once more I have had the misfortune to alarm you, Mademoiselle ? Why do you fear me so much ?

MAGDALEN (*firmly, mastering herself*) : Because I know that you are a wrongdoer—and because you sent for me to come to you. What do you want with me ?

SÜSS : I hope to know you better, Mademoiselle, though your speech is strange to me. I am Court Treasurer, and a man of affairs.

MAGDALEN (*regarding him intently*) : You are the instrument of evil in this land. You know not what is good or bad, high or low, right or wrong. All men speak of your misdeeds. Their hatred is even written

on the fields, in letters of flowers that Heaven may read.

SÜSS : You have bright eyes that should not be clouded by dark knowledge.

MAGDALEN : Oh, you need not humour me ! I am not a child, as you may think from my swooning.

SÜSS : You need not tell me that you are a woman.

MAGDALEN : Do not mock me either ! I say only what I feel !

SÜSS : I am not mocking you, Mademoiselle. Come, tell me what troubles you, and spare me nothing. I can bear all that is said of me if I hear it from your lips.

MAGDALEN : The duchy cries to be delivered from you. . . . (*Meeting Süss's gaze*) No, now—now I cannot speak ! Hard words are there, but I cannot ! I will go !

The DUKE comes out, laughing heartily.

DUKE : No, stay, my dear, stay ! Give the rogue his dressing-down ; I swear he deserves it ! Have no mercy on the infidel Jew !

MAGDALEN, *shrinking from the DUKE, runs into Süss's arms.*

MAGDALEN : Save me—save me from him !

DUKE (*uproariously*) : There, Jew, now you are her protector—a new part for you ! (*To MAGDALEN*) Yes, Mademoiselle, quite new, I assure you ! Do you not know me ?

MAGDALEN (*relinquishing her hold of Süss and curtsying low*) : Highness !

DUKE : That is my loyal beauty ! Your father should bring you oftener to Court—should he not, Jew, hey ? (Süss bows.) We must know each other better. My Treasurer here did well ; you must listen to him, for his magic brings fortune to those who please me. He has news for you, Mademoiselle. For the present—*au revoir !* (To Süss) I trust you with her, Jew, after what I have heard. But no nibbling, mind, no nibbling !

He goes out in high good-humour, slapping his thigh with his riding-whip.

MAGDALEN : Why was his Highness hidden in your house ? Was he—spying on us ?

SÜSS (*with pretended lightness*) : On us ! Come, Mademoiselle, he is the Duke—and we are servants of our masters.

MAGDALEN : What is this news you have to tell me ?

SÜSS : News, Mademoiselle, that should . . . news . . . that should . . . make . . . (*Meeting her eyes again, he is unable to continue.*) Magdalen, what is it that you stir in me and I in you ? The Duke was right ; I am no protector. Nor even a faithful go-between ! You came to me in hatred. You spoke what all the duchy feels—and now—ask no more of me, Magdalen ! Hate me, fear me still ! You do well to fear me !

MAGDALEN (*close to him*) : If I fear you now it is otherwise. Otherwise !

SÜSS : To-night we shall meet in my ballroom.

Until then go your ways, Magdalen. If you listen to the gossips you will learn enough. Give me your hand before we part.

MAGDALEN (*dazed, obeying*) : If you wish it. . . .

The SECRETARY enters.

SECRETARY : The Councillor Weissensee.

WEISSENSEE *comes in, looking keenly from one to the other.* SÜSS *is instantly his suave self again.*

SÜSS : Councillor, I am desolated that your charming daughter should once more have met with an accident in my presence.

WEISSENSEE : Accident ?

SÜSS : She swooned for an instant, but happily we now understand each other better. Is it not so, Mademoiselle ?

MAGDALEN *lowers her eyes without replying.*

WEISSENSEE : Now it is time for us to take leave of his Excellency.

SÜSS : Until to-night, Councillor !

WEISSENSEE (*avoiding his glance*) : Until to-night !

SÜSS : Until to-night, Mademoiselle !

WEISSENSEE *and* MAGDALEN *go out.* *The SECRETARY remains.* SÜSS *goes to the doorway through which the pair have just passed.*

SECRETARY : Your Excellency has no other callers.

SÜSS (*with his back to him*) : That is well. I have made enemies enough for one morning, have I not ?

SECRETARY (*regarding him with surprise*) : Excellency ?

Süss : And perhaps—who knows?—I have even made a friend.

SECRETARY (*laying papers on the table*) : Your Excellency's correspondence.

Süss ignores him, and goes slowly out.

CURTAIN

SCENE III

SÜSS's house in Stuttgart, the same evening. *In the background is a ballroom, approached by steps and forming a raised stage. The performance of a Venetian masque is just ending as the curtain rises. In the darkened foreground of the scene are tables, at which guests in fantastic costumes are seated. The DUCHESS, dressed as Minerva, is lending an ear to the compliments of the ENGLISH LORD, dressed as a Crusader. The opening of a door throws a sudden light upon the pair, who move apart.*

DUCHESS : How do you like the masque, Milord ?

LORD : Better than this light that falls upon us.

DUCHESS (*smiling*) : You must be careful, Milord. There are some who go to the play to see, and others who go to be seen.

LORD : And others who go to see those who go to be seen—is not that the saying in France ? (*Pointing to a beauty in Neapolitan dress, whose laugh is heard from another table*) But tell me, is not that the singer Graziella, dressed as a Neapolitan ?

DUCHESS (*regarding her*) : Yes, that is Graziella.

LORD : Is she not Süß's mistress ?

DUCHESS : Fie, Milord, how should I know our Treasurer's secrets ? He is far too discreet to betray

them. I caught not one glimpse of her when I visited the house this morning.

LORD (*leaning towards her*) : Shall we not look together ?

DUCHESS : For whom, Milord ?

LORD : For Minerva—goddess of wisdom !

DUCHESS : She may be too wise for you, Milord.

The DUCHESS and the ENGLISH LORD continue their conversation in whispered tones. Guests come and go. GRAZIELLA is joined by GENERAL REMCHINGEN, in the costume of a Red Indian. His appearance provokes general laughter.

GRAZIELLA (*making room for him*) : Yes, there is room for our General, if his plumes do not tickle me. (REMCHINGEN *seats himself.*) But you should not turn your back upon the entertainment, General.

GENERAL (*drinking*) : The Jew's wine is his best entertainment. Let him bleed the duchy while his cellar holds these drops of gold.

GRAZIELLA : You are more cheerful than our Councillor Weissensee, whom I passed on the stair. He was dressed as a Spaniard and his daughter as a shepherdess, but their looks were none too gay.

GENERAL : Weissensee is a politician—that is a man who passes. I am a soldier—that is a man who remains. I drink the wine of another who passes—and I remain.

GRAZIELLA : And women pass, and still you remain. Or do they pass you by—our immovable General ?

GENERAL : Bah, let them think so if it pleases them !

WEISSENSEE, as a Spanish grandee, enters from the background with MAGDALEN, as a shepherdess. They become the centre of interest as they make their way to places in the foreground. The ENGLISH LORD leans over to the DUCHESS.

LORD : You see ?

The DUCHESS turns her head to regard MAGDALEN, then smiles lazily.

DUCHESS : I see only as much as pleases me, Milord.

LORD : Then will you look my way ?

DUCHESS : Hush ! Here is my Achilles.

The DUKE, as Achilles, enters with a martial step. Several gentlemen at neighbouring tables rise, but he waves them to their seats again.

DUKE : To-night no ceremony, gentlemen. (*To the DUCHESS*) Ah, my love, you are there ? (*He seats himself at her table.*) But where is our excellent Süß, hey ?

DUCHESS : If he has vanished, we may be sure he has some surprise in store for us.

GENERAL (*from his table*) : Perhaps he will spring from a trap-door, wrapped in brimstone and flames.

SÜß (*in Saracen's costume, appearing on the stage*) : No, General, that would exceed the duties even of a host.

GENERAL (*growling*) : At any rate, like the devil, the fellow is everywhere !

Süß comes down and moves smiling among his guests.

SÜSS (*to the DUKE and DUCHESS*) : I trust your Highnesses have been well served ?

For answer, the DUKE lifts his glass to him and drinks. SÜSS turns to the ENGLISH LORD.

A Crusader, Milord ? I hope you will not exterminate a poor Saracen like myself ?

LORD (*coolly*) : That would exceed the duties of a guest.

SÜSS (*patronizing him*) : Well said, Milord. (*He passes on to WEISSENSEE's table.*) Councillor, I see that all eyes are on your daughter's beauty. (*He pauses an instant before passing to the next table, where a young Registrar is lolling in drunken fashion.*) Our young Registrar at the shrine of Bacchus ? (*Lifting a fore-finger*) Let there be no error in to-morrow's accounts !

DUKE : But what if the error should be to your advantage, Jew ?

SÜSS : Then he shall be promoted auditor, my lord Duke. (*Passing on.*) Dom Bartelemy—our famous connoisseur of precious stones !

DOM BARTELEMY : At your Excellency's service.

SÜSS : We must give you an occasion to exercise your skill. (*Raising his voice*) Your Highnesses, ladies and gentlemen, pray close your eyes for an instant, and open them when I clap my hands.

The guests comply. Süss claps his hands, and dancers appear, throwing each lady a rose, to which a jewel or other trinket is attached.

SEVERAL LADIES : A bracelet ! A brooch ! A pendant ! A clasp !

DUCHESS (*examining her gift*) : A ring in the petals ! You are princely, Jew !

SÜSS : You are generous, Highness. (*Then, to the ladies around him*) They are trifles, ladies, trifles. Dom Bartelemey here will appraise them at their true value.

DOM BARTELEMY : They are trifles, I am sure, by comparison with the stone on your own finger.

SÜSS (*slipping off his ring*) : So you still covet my solitaire ?

DOM BARTELEMY (*eagerly*) : I will give you a castle for it.

SÜSS (*putting on the ring again*) : But the stone is not for sale.

DUCHESS (*to the Duke*) : Now your Jew is putting a castle on his finger !

SÜSS (*turning to MAGDALEN*) : I hope that Mademoiselle is not displeased with my poor gift ?

MAGDALEN (*lifting a rope of pearls lying in her lap*) : Are these—for me ? Oh no, I beg you, no !

SÜSS (*simply*) : Forgive me, Mademoiselle. I know that sincerity alone deserves your thanks. (*He takes the necklace and passes it to DOM BARTELEMY.*) Tell, me, Dom Bartelemey, what is the value of this necklace ?

DOM BARTELEMY (*examining it*) : Ah, this one is better . . . fine pearls, fine pearls . . . three thousand florins. . . .

SÜSS : The trinket is yours at the price, Dom

Bartelemy. You will pay that sum to my secretary here. (*To the SECRETARY*) And you, Nicolas, will scatter it to the crowd at our gates—as a gift from the most generous of my guests.

DUKE (*at his table, drinking*) : *Mille tonnerres !*

GENERAL (*to WEISSENSEE*) : The rogue robs with one hand, and returns his booty with the other.

WEISSENSEE : That is the art of government.

SECRETARY (*appearing on the stage, in astrologer's dress*) : Your Highnesses, my lords and ladies, supper is served.

General animation. Most of the guests move towards the background, but WEISSENSEE and REMCHINGEN remain with MAGDALEN. The DUKE leads SÜSS aside.

DUKE : Come, Süß, you shall be generous to your prince as well. I want to make myself at home in your palace.

SÜSS : My roof is your Highness's. May I hope that our little Neapolitan has found favour with you ?

DUKE : The shepherdess, Jew—the flower that blooms in my fox of a Councillor's garden !

SÜSS (*with a glance toward MAGDALEN*) : I beg your Highness to let me speak with her first.

DUKE : Yes, you shall prepare her, Jew. You shall prepare her ! (*Calling to MAGDALEN's companions*) Come, gentlemen, we know that supper spells Tokay. (*To REMCHINGEN*) Come, old com-

rade of the hatchet and the scalps ! (*To WEISSENSEE*)
Come, noble Spaniard !

WEISSENSEE and REMCHINGEN *join the Duke, and go out with him.* SÜSS *remains with* MAGDALEN.

SÜSS : I will make you no compliments, Made-moiselle, for you have heard them from others.

MAGDALEN (*in a low voice*) : I must speak with you alone !

SÜSS : Are we not alone, you and I ?

MAGDALEN : To-day I have learned what is expected of me. My father would tell me nothing, but others have been kinder—or crueller. They tell me I am to be a great lady ; they say I cannot refuse the honour that is offered me.

SÜSS : Then you know there is not a woman here who does not envy you, Magdalen—and not a man who does not approve his Highness's choice.

MAGDALEN (*leaning towards him*) : Not one ?

SÜSS : The road you choose leads to power. That is my road too ; we follow it hand in hand.

MAGDALEN : We ?

SÜSS : You can rule the fortunes of the duchy if you will. We can rule them together.

MAGDALEN : Do you think of nothing but power ?

SÜSS : Let us share that one ambition, Magdalen—since we can share nothing else.

MAGDALEN : I have no ambitions, only a heart. I do not covet the power you speak of. Your power means taking, always taking ; I would give and give !

SÜSS : Are you not giving enough, and too much ?

MAGDALEN : That I give unwillingly. Alas, if I could choose my lover, I should look elsewhere !

Süss : And I am no freer than yourself, Magdalen. If you would give and give, I must sell and sell ! To gain what I will, I lose what I must.

MAGDALEN : Must you yield everything—and everyone ? Is there no love that stands above such bargaining ?

Süss (*turning away*) : Magdalen, this is no place and no hour to speak of love. When first we met, you and I were parted already. But if you will, you can be my friend at Court.

MAGDALEN : I—— ?

Süss : Do you think his Excellency the Treasurer needs no friends ? You have told me what the people say of me ; I can tell you I have none but enemies at the Castle. Like yourself, I stand alone.

MAGDALEN : What are you asking of me ?

Süss : Yourself ! Not the bodily self that passes to another, but the will that is your own. The secret thought that makes us one, this very moment—and gives the right to rule others.

MAGDALEN : Are you content with such a bond between us ?

Süss : Life is not contentment, Magdalen ; life is necessity ! Are you ready to yield that self I ask ? Together we can do much. Are you ready ?

MAGDALEN (*after a silence*) : I am ready.

Süss : With open eyes ?

MAGDALEN : With open eyes.

SÜSS : Our hands are clasped ?

MAGDALEN : Our hands are clasped.

SÜSS : Life is ready, purse in hand.

The DUKE returns from the background as he speaks.

DUKE : Now, Jew, you have monopolies enough already. You must share the beauty of the evening with your guest.

SÜSS : That I have told her, Highness, though most unwillingly.

DUKE : Aha, he is my faithful Jew ! (*To MAGDALEN*) Will you not sup with me, Mademoiselle ?

MAGDALEN (*firm, resolved*) : If you wish it, Highness.

She yields her arm to the DUKE.

DUKE (*in undertones, as they mount the steps in the background*) : Come then, my shepherdess, my beauty ! (*As she is about to follow the direction of the supper-room, he draws her the other way.*) No, not that way—no, no ! My Jew can serve us better. You shall see that he can serve us better. . . .

They pass out of sight. Guests return from the supper-room to the background of the scene. Süß finds GRAZIELLA at his elbow.

GRAZIELLA : So thoughtful, my lord Treasurer ?

SÜSS : My lord Jew, my lord hireling, Graziella !

GRAZIELLA : Oh, all men are one to me, if only they are lordly !

SÜSS : Happy woman ! You shall take your choice of them.

GRAZIELLA (*coming closer*) : All men are one to me

—except one. Have I done well this evening, Süß?

SÜß : You have done well, my dear Graziella. I praise your management and your discretion. No one would guess that you have been mistress in this house.

GRAZIELLA : Perhaps because every one knows it.

SÜß : And no one would guess, my dear Graziella, that to-morrow you will be mistress here no longer.

GRAZIELLA : So—we are to part?

SÜß : I recommend you for promotion. Need I say more?

GRAZIELLA (*stamping her foot*) : Oh, you have said enough ! I am dismissed ! And for whom, may I ask ? Do I know her ?

SÜß : If I do not speak of you, am I likely to speak of her ?

GRAZIELLA : So this is the reason for your sudden absences—your visits to the country of late ?

SÜß : They do not concern you any longer, Graziella. Nor do I concern you. Let us make no pretences.

A silence.

GRAZIELLA (*not without tenderness*) : Farewell, Süß.

SÜß : Farewell, my dear Graziella. I shall not forget you.

He kisses her hand. She joins the crowd, followed by curious and amused glances. A number of guests return from the supper-room. Among them are the young Registrar, and WEISSENSEE, who comes forward.

WEISSENSEE (to Süß) : My daughter is not to be found. Where is my daughter, Excellency ?

SÜß : Does a wise man ask what he knows already ?

WEISSENSEE : Like yourself, I stand above common prejudices. But if you had a child of your own——

SÜß (*with a sudden movement*) : Well ? What then ?

WEISSENSEE : I imagine that you would not . . .

SÜß : Let us face realities, Councillor. Your promotion will be made to-morrow. Pray accept my congratulations to-night.

WEISSENSEE (*without looking at him*) : I thank you, Excellency.

WEISSENSEE turns away to a table where the young Registrar, now quite drunk, insists on rising and making ceremonious bows to him. WEISSENSEE accepts a glass of wine and sits staring before him. The DUCHESS and the ENGLISH LORD return from the supper-room, with other guests.

DUCHESS : A royal evening, Jew. The Emperor himself could do no better. You are a friendly host to lonely guests, are you not ?

SÜß : I see with pleasure that your Highness is not altogether deserted.

LORD : No, indeed !

DUCHESS (*in Süß's ear*) : Our Englishman is discreet. How fortunate that I knew your house already .

The SECRETARY mounts the stage with ceremony, and the assembled guests turn to him.

SECRETARY : Your Highness, my lords and ladies,

on this occasion his Excellency offers you a ballet of Mars and Venus, with music by the Maestro Scarlatti.

Animation and movement. The DUCHESS and the ENGLISH LORD seat themselves as before. The ballet of Mars and Venus, to the music of Scarlatti, is danced on the stage on the background. As the dancers return to the stage to bow their acknowledgments at the conclusion of the ballet, the DUKE comes past them and leads the applause.

DUKE : Bravo, bravo ! Mars and Venus, bravo !
(*The dancers go off. He descends the steps and comes to Süß.*) All is well, Jew, all is well ! But she is a trifle discomposed. (*Lowering his voice*) Let her go now, Jew ; her father can smuggle her away.

Süß : It would ill become any guest to leave the house before your Highness.

DUKE : Do you hear me ? Let her go ! (*Süß turns and whispers to WEISSENSEE, who rises and goes out.*) That is better. What a pair of eyes she has, Süß ! Like forest pools. Looking into them I thought of your uncle, the prophet—what was his name ?

Süß : Rabbi Gabriel, my lord Duke.

DUKE : And what did he prophesy for me ? A ducal crown—well, that I have already. But what else ? Bah, may he choke of his sorceries, the cursed Jew, the dog, the wizard ! (*He drinks.*) Let him prophesy what he will, I do not fear him. I am Karl Alexander, by the grace of God Duke of Württemberg ! I stand above destiny ! (*In a ridiculous*

statuesque pose, one foot upon a chair.) By Jupiter's grace, I am Achilles ! (*Laughter among the company.*) But what—but what—— ?

MAGDALEN and her father have appeared. *The guests stand motionless and silent ; the DUKE is rigid as a monument.*

WEISSENSEE : With your Highness's permission, we will take leave of our host.

The DUKE bows with grotesque dignity. WEISSENSEE takes leave of SÜSS, who bends as if to kiss MAGDALEN's hand, but steps back as she withdraws it from him. No one moves until the pair have gone out. There is a pause—the guests, embarrassed, looking covertly at each other. The DUKE with an air of bravado throws back his head and laughs.

SÜSS : Our good Councillor's bad example must not be followed. Strike up a gavotte ! Let the dancers lead the way !

The guests break up into groups, laughing and talking.

The young Registrar, in trying to rise, rolls from his chair to the floor. There is a burst of laughter.

DUKE : So, there is one man drunker than myself ?

SÜSS (*to the servants*) : Lackeys ! A coach for this offal !

The servants help the Registrar off.

DUKE : Brr . . . the night grows chilly ! (*As SÜSS moves away*) Do not leave me, Jew.

SÜSS : I must order the dance.

DUKE (*catching hold of him*) : No, you shall stay with me. Aha, you did well, Jew, you are a purveyor of

dainties indeed ! I will see that you are well rewarded. (*He staggers to a chair, dragging Süß with him.*)
Wine ! I am thirsty !

(*Süß signals to a servant, who brings wine. The*

DUKE *lolls in a chair, drinking.*)

DUCHESS (*coming forward tactfully*) : The night was charming, Jew !

SÜß *kisses her hand, and she goes out with the other guests.*

DUKE (*maudlin*) : A spirited filly ! The rest are nothing but a whiff of scent. But this one is mine now—mine !—eyes like forest pools—d'ye hear me, Jew ? (*He drinks again.*)

SÜß (*standing cold and still by his chair*) : I hear your Highness.

DUKE : Then why must you be silent, curse you ? Are you frozen by the look of a frightened maid ? She was not for you, Jew—not this time ! Not this time !

He is growing heavier and more inarticulate. He drinks again.

But her eyes ! Such eyes ! (*His head sags on his chest. He sprawls in his chair, his helmet awry.*) Like forest pools !

The DUKE snores. Süß stands by his side, cold rage on his face. He beckons to the two servants, who have returned.

SÜß : His Highness's coach !

CURTAIN

SCENE IV

The keep of Süss's castle in the forest of Hirsau. At a table, with books and parchments spread out before them, are seated RABBI GABRIEL and NAEMI, Süss's daughter, a girl of seventeen. In the background is a terrace with battlements. It is late afternoon.

NAEMI (*reading aloud from the Song of Songs*) : " My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. . . . O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear they voice ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. . . . My beloved is mine, and I am his ; he feedeth among the lilies." (*Leaning back in her place, and closing her eyes*) How beautiful is the Song of Songs !

RABBI GABRIEL : It is more than beautiful, child. Every sentence, every letter has a secret meaning. The spirit lives in written words.

NAEMI : Oh, uncle, to-day I do not wish to grope for hidden thoughts ! " My beloved is mine, and I am his : he feedeth among the lilies." Is that not sense enough ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Yes, if dreaming be sense enough. Those words were first spoken in the mists of time. They were written down by some man who thought them beautiful, even as you think them. But then a light shone upon the characters, so that they came to life and grew and intertwined themselves in everlasting shape. Is not that the miracle of miracles ? With bodily eyes you look upon these images of human thoughts, but even as you read they dissolve into the mists of the spirit, returning to that secret world, that third world, whence they came.

NAEMI (*after a silence*) : I have something to tell you, uncle. All day I have wished to tell it you.

RABBI GABRIEL (*still bending over a parchment*) : Well, child ?

NAEMI : Last night I saw Jacob's ladder in my dream.

He looks up suddenly.

It was wreathed in flowers, and angels were going up and down. I began to climb ; but suddenly the ladder was on fire, and I was scorched at every rung. I climbed faster, faster ; and above me shone a golden light, much brighter than the sun ; and I heard silver voices singing all around me : and a figure beckoned to me from the midst of the brightness ; and then I saw that it was myself.

RABBI GABRIEL : Your image beckoned to you from—above ?

NAEMI : Yes. And to-day I feel lighter than the air ; all my sadness is past. Forgive me, uncle, but

to-day I cannot look for mysteries. I can only feel—how beautiful the Song of Songs, how beautiful this life !

RABBI GABRIEL : But, child——

An old SERVANT enters.

SERVANT : The master is here.

Süss follows on his heels, wearing riding-dress, boots and cloak.

RABBI GABRIEL : Josef !

NAEMI : Father ! (*Her arms about him.*) You—you—dear father !

RABBI GABRIEL : Clasp her, Josef, but see to it you do not crush her !

He goes out.

SÜSS (*stroking NAEMI's hair*) : My child, my darling ! These tears for me ?

NAEMI : Oh, that you should be here ! That I should have you again ! You are no dream ! I feel your arms, I hear your voice !

SÜSS : Yes, child, I am holding you fast.

NAEMI : But how long will you stay with me ? Only to-day and to-morrow, as you always do ?

SÜSS : To-day, to-morrow, perhaps longer still.

NAEMI : Oh, father, to think that you could leave me alone so often, and never guess my longing for you ! This time my heart cried to you, but still you heard nothing.

SÜSS : You see that I heard, for I came to you. Tell me, darling child, why did you need me so much ?

NAEMI : I must tell you, even if you scold me for

it. You know there is a clearing in the forest outside our walls, with a cottage and a field. You see them from the steps of the summer-house.

SÜSS : Well ?

NAEMI : The field—dear father, how shall I tell you ? Great letters stood there, written in poppies, letters of your name. And underneath were ugly, wicked words—hateful, dirty words, written in corn-flowers.

SÜSS : “Josef Süß, Pig-Jew and Traitor.” Were those the words ?

NAEMI (*averting her eyes*) : Yes.

SÜSS : Some farmer must have sown the flowers. A clumsy piece of foolery. You must forget it, child.

NAEMI : I read those flowers and then I knew nothing more, until they carried me into the house. For hours—it seemed for years—I knew nothing. Then it was my heart cried, and you would not answer.

SÜSS : But my joy, my darling, were you ill ? Did you lie there alone, unconscious ? My pride, my beloved—were you in danger from this miserable thing you saw ?

NAEMI : So they told me, father. But all I knew was that I longed for you. Oh, take me with you to the city, and let me drive away those hateful thoughts men have of you !

SÜSS : But Naemi, child, I come to you to forget them ; I come to you because that world is often loathsome to me. Now oftener than ever. I am

hated much, it is true. The office I hold is heavy, and the people are blind and foolish. Such accusing flowers blossom in many fields of the duchy. The Duke himself smiles at them, and I must smile too. If I have hidden you in this tower among the forests, it is so that the world may not perplex your spirit—so that you may remain the better part of me, Naemi ! Believe in me, child, for faith is strong, faith is pure. Believe in your father, my darling, my treasure !

NAEMI : Oh, father, when you are here and when I hear your voice, those writings on the field fade from my eyes, and only my faith is clear ! But now you must rest. Here is your gabardine—and here your cap. Now you are at home again, are you not ?

She helps Süß to put on the garments.

SÜß : Yes. Now I am at home again.

NAEMI : And I will make ready a meal for you. “My beloved is mine, and I am his ; he feedeth among the lilies.” (*Smiling at him*) Do you know that has a secret meaning ? But I will not look for it to-day. My joy has come to me !

She goes out. Meanwhile the RABBI GABRIEL has returned.

RABBI GABRIEL : And have you calmed her fears ?

SÜß : Now she is just as I have always known her.

RABBI GABRIEL : Are you content with that ? Do you mean to leave the child here any longer ?

SÜSS : I wish to be near her, but I can seldom leave the city.

RABBI GABRIEL : Can you not read the signs? This fever of unrest that has lately shaken her, this illness since she has known of the hatred that surrounds you?

SÜSS : She must be guarded more carefully. She must speak with no one, she must see nothing beyond these walls.

RABBI GABRIEL : Can you make her deaf and blind? Your very presence corrupts her. Purify your life, Josef, flee with her together from this world of yours! It is no true goal you are pursuing, but a road choked in filth and misery.

SÜSS : Uncle, you need not tell me that yours is the deeper world. I know it well, and now I see it in the eyes of Naemi. But in that outer world it is success alone that counts, success that brings the mastery of men. And I have succeeded! I hold life in my arms as a lover holds a mistress. It gives me all it has to give——

RABBI GABRIEL : And takes a fragment of your soul for every gift.

SÜSS : I seek power, and power spells revenge. Revenge for all that my people have suffered.

RABBI GABRIEL (*coldly*) : One crutch of lies is broken; do you already hobble on another? Do you feel the call to avenge your race? Is that your deepest, innermost conviction?

SÜSS : It is my deepest, innermost conviction. The task is laid upon me from my birth.

RABBI GABRIEL : Is your belief strong enough to withstand the test ?

SÜSS : Try if you will.

RABBI GABRIEL : Then to-day you shall accept knowledge from my hands.

He unlocks a chest, and hands Süss a bundle of letters.

SÜSS : What are these ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Read them.

SÜSS (*turning over the letters*) : Letters—written to my mother ? (*Reading*) Georg . . . Georg . . . Georg. . . .

RABBI GABRIEL : Georg von Heydersdorff.

SÜSS : Georg von Heydersdorff ? (*He reads further and looks up.*) Georg von Heydersdorff ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Your father, Reb Josef Süss.

SÜSS : My father a Christian—a noble of the Court ! My father that rake, that spendthrift ! That broken soldier—stripped of his rank and banished !

RABBI GABRIEL : Do not rail at him. He paid the penalty and more. He died a monk, in the cloisters of Hildesheim.

SÜSS : A monk !

RABBI GABRIEL : Your mother was resolved that one day you should know.

SÜSS : That man my father !

RABBI GABRIEL : And do you still proclaim yourself the avenger of Israel ?

SÜSS : Brat of a singer and a monk ! Bastard of a Christian and a Jewess !

RABBI GABRIEL : Do you see the road to power before you now ?

A silence.

SÜSS : Why have you told me this thing ?

RABBI GABRIEL : Not to make you Gentile, Josef, for you are still your mother's son. But to show you—thus can power be broken, thus can dreamers be awakened !

He goes out. Süss sits staring before him, then mechanically begins turning the leaves of the letters again. A SERVANT enters from the terrace.

SERVANT : A gentleman desires to speak with the master.

SÜSS : What gentleman can visit me here ?

SERVANT : He gives no name.

WEISSENSEE (*entering in huntsman's dress*) : It is I, Excellency.

The SERVANT goes.

SÜSS (*staring at WEISSENSEE*) : You—here ?

WEISSENSEE : My own estate lies near by. Your gates do not open, but a way can be found by one who grew up in these forests.

SÜSS : So this is your revenge, President ?

WEISSENSEE : May I not pay a visit of ceremony to a neighbour ?

SÜSS : It is not for nothing that the Duke calls you a fox.

WEISSENSEE : His Highness is gracious to me. (*Looking about him*) But surely, Excellency, you are not alone here? Forgive me if I intrude upon a retreat of romance.

SÜSS : I keep no women here, if that is your meaning.

WEISSENSEE : Indeed? I had heard rumours to another effect.

SÜSS : You may contradict them, President!

WEISSENSEE : Your Excellency's tone is strange, is it not? Come, have we not every reason to understand each other? We have much in common—you, the successful Jew, and I, the spectator and adventurer. We share a passion for Life, do we not?

SÜSS (*coldly*) : You did not come to tell me that, President.

WEISSENSEE : I came to give you proof of my friendship. I have news for you, secret, urgent news.

SÜSS (*with bitterness*) : So your daughter has lost no time! But when I made her the royal mistress, I did not bargain for her family.

WEISSENSEE : I beg you, Excellency, not to say what is best left unsaid. It is the news that should concern you.

SÜSS (*turning away*) : I have nothing to do with politics in this house.

WEISSENSEE : And yet you must be told. My daughter learns that the Duke proposes to dissolve Parliament and establish a military *régime*.

SÜSS (*after a silence*) : When is this to be ?

WEISSENSEE : The date will be fixed in a few days. All deputies of the Chamber are to be imprisoned, and that will be the signal to the Army. His Highness purposely leaves you in ignorance of his plans. General Remchingen is in command, as you may guess.

SÜSS : And you, as President of the Council—where do you stand ?

WEISSENSEE : I stand beside your Excellency, for I know that is the safest place. I can help you to outwit a world of fools and soldiers.

SÜSS (*violently*) : No ! I will not be indebted to you ! I will not submit to that !

WEISSENSEE : Again I see you strangely agitated. Very well, I must leave you. (*With deliberation*) His Highness does me the honour to be a guest at my hunting-lodge, and I must rejoin him in the forest.

SÜSS : The Duke—your guest ? Here ?

WEISSENSEE : Here, Excellency.

He bows and withdraws. Süß stares after him, then awakening to energy goes to a door and calls :

SÜSS : Uncle ! Uncle !

RABBI GABRIEL *appears in the doorway.*

Uncle, tell Naemi to make ready ! Order a carriage—let my horse be saddled ! Make haste !

RABBI GABRIEL : Whither this journey, Josef ? To the city or the wilderness ? Are you fleeing from the world or from yourself ?

SÜSS : Old man, I have no time for riddles. Make ready to leave within the hour !

RABBI GABRIEL : For once I will obey you.

Before he can leave the room the old SERVANT enters breathless from the terrace.

SERVANT : Master, there are huntsmen below !

SÜSS : We are too late !

SERVANT : Armed followers are with them. They are lifting the gates from their hinges and forcing entrance !

SÜSS : Uncle, the Duke is here !

RABBI GABRIEL (*coldly*) : Your world is small, Josef.

SÜSS : Go to Naemi ; let her room be locked ! I charge you—none of them must see or know of her !

RABBI GABRIEL : I will go !

RABBI GABRIEL *goes out*. SÜSS, *alone*, *awaits the party*. *Voices are heard ; then from the terrace enter the DUKE, GRAZIELLA, the ENGLISH LORD, WEISSENSEE, and GENERAL REMCHINGEN. The SERVANT accompanies them.*

DUKE : A surprise for you, Süß, and for us ! So this is your lair, hey ? Your eagle's nest ?

SÜSS : This is my house, Highness.

DUKE : We made short work of your gates. Soldierly work, hey, General, hey, Milord ?

LORD (*brushing his coat*) : Your Highness adds unforeseen pleasures to the chase.

SÜSS (*to the SERVANT*) : Wine !

The SERVANT brings wine and glasses.

DUKE (*to Süss*) : But what black magic do you practise here? What rig is that you are wearing? What heathen goddess do you dangle on your knees among these tree-tops?

SÜSS (*smiling*) : You may look for her if you please. I seek nothing here but a breath of air and a rest from the labour of filling your Highness's coffers. And if I wear the garments of my people, I am not ashamed of them.

DUKE (*to his companions*) : The rogue always has an answer ready!

GENERAL : He may fill your Highness's coffers, perhaps; but now we see how much of the gold sticks to his fingers!

DUKE : Let him take his profits, brother General. For every florin that sticks, two come to me.

WEISSENSEE : It is written : Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.

DUKE : And how he treads it—how he treads it out!

The SERVANT brings wine, fills glasses for the company, and withdraws.

Prosit, brother General and Milord! Prosit, Graziella! You are not drinking, Süss?

SÜSS (*taking a glass*) : *Prosit, Highness!*

GENERAL : *Mort de ma vie!* The Jew's wine is good; so much I have always granted him.

SÜSS : May I ask how your Highness found your way to my house?

DUKE (*drinking*) : Ask our shrewd President here. It was he who smelt you out.

SÜSS and WEISSENSEE regard each other.

SÜSS (*with growing perturbation*) : And where are the followers who came with you ?

DUKE (*cunningly*) : Aha, would you know, would you know ? Why not in your kitchens, Süß, snatching kisses from your wenches ? Or have you no wenches in this hermitage ?

SÜSS (*with a movement to leave the room*) : If your Highness will excuse me for one moment——

DUKE : You shall remain ! Not one step—d'ye hear me ?

SÜSS stands motionless.

GRAZIELLA : I like this hanging lamp of yours, Süß. You shall make me a present of it for my boudoir. (*Coming to him.*) I must have some keepsake from my Jew, must I not ?

GENERAL (*drunkenly*) : Bah, what do you want with his Levantine trash ? I can see nothing here worth looting !

SÜSS : I am glad to hear it, General, for your prowess in that field is well known.

GENERAL (*hotly*) : What, Jew, do you dare insult me ?

DUKE : Let him be, brother General. You are a match for a score of Frenchmen, but not for my Jew's tongue.

A cry is heard.

GRAZIELLA : What was that cry ?

Süss again tries to leave the room.

DUKE : Not one step ! Have we found you out, Jew ? Is this the retreat where you slit the throats of little children ?

The door is thrown open by two armed huntsmen, who stand on either side of it. RABBI GABRIEL and NAEMI enter together, NAEMI carrying a basket of fruit. The huntsmen withdraw. There is a silence of astonishment.

GENERAL : I thought as much ! Behind the hermitage there hangs a petticoat !

DUKE (*to Süss*) : Faithless Jew, do you hide such a treasure from your Prince ? Do you keep such a morsel for your own larder ?

LORD (*to GRAZIELLA*) : Again our host proves himself a man of taste.

GENERAL : With an eye for a country wench !

GRAZIELLA : You are a boor, General. (*Smiling upon NAEMI*) Come to me, little darling ! Such eyes and such a skin ! (*Approaching*) Let me stroke you, my pet !

SÜSS (*interposing*) : Do not touch her !

GRAZIELLA : Why not ?

SÜSS (*to the DUKE*) : The demoiselle is my daughter, Highness.

A general movement of astonishment.

DUKE : *Mille tonnerres !* Is it possible ?

GRAZIELLA (*stupefied*) : Your daughter, do you say ?

SÜSS : Make your curtsey, child. This is my lord Duke, to whom the land and all of us belong.

NAEMI *makes her curtsey.*

GENERAL : Who would have credited the fox with such a cub ?

DUKE : You are a marvel, Süß. You coin silver—but you breed gold.

SÜSS (*to NAEMI*) : And now his Highness will permit you to retire. (*To RABBI GABRIEL*) Take her with you, uncle !

DUKE : Not so fast ! Why so niggardly, Süß, why so prudish ? Every maid must see the world for once. Come, pretty fawn, and kiss your Sovereign's hand.

NAEMI *hesitates, shyly.*

SÜSS : Do as his Highness bids you.

NAEMI *approaches the DUKE.*

DUKE : Come, I shall not bite you, shy creature !

GENERAL : I swear her shyness is not from the father's side.

DUKE : What strange fruits are those in your basket ? Will you not offer me one of them ?

NAEMI (*as if clutching her basket*) : They are for father !

WEISSENSEE : They are pomegranates, Highness. It must have cost a deal of pains to grow them in our climate.

NAEMI : Oh, father can do everything !

DUKE : Yes, your father is a prodigy. *Mille tonnerres*, Süß, the maid pleases me ! (*He takes her by the chin and looks down upon her upturned face.*) All ebony

and ivory. . . . And what is your name, Hebrew Venus ?

NAEMI is silent and fearful.

SÜSS : The maiden is called Naemi. Take her, uncle !

RABBI GABRIEL comes forward, and she flies into his arms.

DUKE : Ah, I had forgotten you, my sorcerer ! So now your trade is the schooling of a Jewish nun ? I wager you keep her closer kennelled than my dogs, hey ?

RABBI GABRIEL : More must be guarded, where more can be spoiled.

DUKE : Old wizard ! I remember your reading of my hand. Will you not prophesy again for me, and this time tell me all ?

RABBI GABRIEL : My lord Duke, I have only one office here ; I am this child's protector. With your permission I will take her away.

DUKE : Take her, then, in the devil's name, since you must. (*To NAEMI*) Give me your hand, pretty one. Your uncle is an old badger, and you should not heed him too much. He knows nothing of little princesses. Farewell !

RABBI GABRIEL leads NAEMI out.

I vow I never saw such a maid before. (*To WEISSENSEE*) Nor you either, President, in all your travels. (*To Süß*) A bride fit for Solomon. He had a thousand wives, hey, Jew, had he not ? And lived in your Testament with all of them ?

Süss *is silent.*

Are you a fool, Süss ? Can you not take a jest in good part ? Has your old sorcerer darkened your wits ?
(*Pacing up and down*) *Mille tonnerres*, this is a house to make one's flesh creep ! It stinks of Jewry and the grave. Let us go, my friends. We are indebted to you, Süss. We will not quarrel with your hospitality—surly though it was !

Süss : I will escort your Highness, for the path is steep.

He goes out with the DUKE, the ENGLISH LORD, GRAZIELLA and WEISSENSEE. The GENERAL lingers a moment.

GENERAL : One last gulp of the Jew's accursed wine !

He drinks and follows them, RABBI GABRIEL presently enters and opens a window.

RABBI GABRIEL : The breath of evil men does harm. Like creeping vermin are their thoughts. Fresh air, the evening air !

Süss *returns.*

Süss : Uncle, I must take the child with me !

RABBI GABRIEL : Yes, Josef, take your child and flee with her, as Lot fled from Sodom ! Flee before fire and brimstone rain upon you !

Süss : Hush !

NAEMI has just come in.

NAEMI : Oh, father, how glad I am the strangers have gone ! They were so loud and boisterous ; I tremble still to think of them.

SÜSS : I have good news for you, Naemi. You are going on a journey.

NAEMI (*troubled*) : Into the world—where they have gone ?

SÜSS : This time I shall be with you. I shall protect you !

The SERVANT enters and calls Süß aside.

SERVANT : A message from the Lord Duke. He bids you accompany him to Stuttgart.

SÜSS : To Stuttgart—now ?

SERVANT : His Highness said—without delay.

SÜSS (*after an instant*) : My horse and groom !

The SERVANT goes out.

RABBI GABRIEL : Do you mean to leave the child—now ?

SÜSS (*struggling with himself*) : I must. This is a royal command. It is clear that the matter is urgent. (*With secret triumph*) I can guess what matter that is. Just now, when he feels that he owes me reparation—just now I shall find my opportunity ! When the task is accomplished, I can join you both—for good ! Farewell, Naemi, and have no fear !

NAEMI (*clinging to him*) : Must you truly go ? Before I have had time to see you, to speak with you, father ?

SÜSS : No tears, child ! Only no tears ! I shall be with you soon.

NAEMI : Father !

SÜSS : My uncle will guard you as before. Farewell ! (*Going out with RABBI GABRIEL*) Come with

me to the gates. I have no time to lose, and I must speak with you.

RABBI GABRIEL (*out of sight*): Say no more, Josef! No more!

SÜSS (*out of sight*): Uncle, this is the call I have awaited for months past. It must be answered.

Their voices recede as they descend. NAEMI, alone, goes to a window and looks out.

NAEMI: "I opened to my beloved; but he had withdrawn himself, and was gone; I called him, but he gave me no answer." . . . My pomegranates were for him, for my beloved. . . . "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love . . . his banner over me was love." . . .

A movement in the background. The DUKE appears on the terrace.

DUKE: Hist! Little dove!

NAEMI, *in terror, shrinks backward to the remotest corner of the twilight room.*

There, did I scare you, foolish child? You need not fear me! (*He comes forward, panting*) You see you have a climber for your Prince!

NAEMI: What do you want? Father is not here!

DUKE: Goose! I have seen to that! Why, you are trembling! And you stare as though your eyes were frozen. Do I look so terrible? Come, you know me—call me by my name!

NAEMI (*crying out*): Oh, father, father! Come to me!

DUKE: You know he is not here. There, I only

want to stroke you, my dove, my fawn ! I only want to tell you you are beautiful ! Come, call me by my name, just once ! Karl Alexander ! (*His arm is about her waist.*) Your little heart is dancing like a ball !

NAEMI : Who are you ? Are you Sammael, the messenger of death ?

DUKE (*as though excited by her resistance*) : I know of no Sammael. I am Karl Alexander, duke of Württemberg, and you must love me.

He kisses her, while she stands rigid.

Come, kiss me for yourself ! Sweet, shy, dark, naughty child ! (*Brutally*) Are you your father's daughter, and so prudish ? Then I must teach you !

He covers her with kisses.

NAEMI (*writhing in horror*) : No—no ! (*Wrenching herself free*) Father ! Father, where are you ? Save me, save me !

She retreats toward the terrace.

DUKE (*stumping after her*) : Would you make a fool of me, hey ? You shall learn obedience !

NAEMI (*moving backward toward the battlemented terrace wall*) : Save me ! Father, father !

DUKE (*pursuing her*) : Do you mean to cheat me, little traitress ? Stay—stay—child—O God—the wall—the wall !

Suddenly, between two battlements, she is gone. The DUKE stumbles up to the battlements and peers over into the dusk. An instant's silence, then RABBI GABRIEL'S voice is heard below, calling :

RABBI GABRIEL (*unseen*) : Naemi—Naemi, child, where are you ? Naemi ! Naemi ! Ah !

The DUKE leans over the battlements, looking down, then stumbles into the house as though to hide himself. A confused murmur is heard. The RABBI GABRIEL comes slowly up the steps. He enters with NAEMI's body in his arms, and lays his burden on a couch. Then he silently draws the curtains that cover the archway of the terrace, covers a mirror that hangs on a wall, and lights candles one by one. Another murmur from below. In the midst of it Süß's voice is heard.

SÜß (*unseen*) : Some mistake must have been made. His Highness was not there. But why are you all so—— (*He comes up the steps, and enters.*) Uncle ! Where is Naemi ?

RABBI GABRIEL (*standing aside*) : Here.

SÜß (*stammering*) : Who ? What ? (*Crying out.*) Naemi ! Naemi !

He falls to the ground beside her body. RABBI GABRIEL stands over him for a moment, and then speaks.

RABBI GABRIEL : Josef ! The Duke . . . the . . .

SÜß looks up, and they stare at one another. Presently the DUKE enters, and the RABBI GABRIEL withdraws in silence.

DUKE (*with uncouth sincerity*) : I am grieved, Süß, truly grieved and sorry. I would give a year of my life that this should not have been. Do not take me for a libertine who must have his will at any cost. If I could have foreseen this, I would not have asked so

much as to kiss her hand. But who would have thought the maid would so mistake a jest of mine ?

Süss is silent.

But now, Süß, you must not bury yourself in your grief. Life has other things in store for you. Your Prince is in your debt, and you are in his favour. Let that comfort you.

Süss is silent.

If I have wronged you, I freely beg your forgiveness. I would have nothing stand between us. Nay, I will reward you, Süß. The full power you have so often asked of me is yours. You shall be my right-hand man—you and no other. We will do nothing in the future save by your advice.

Süss : You are—gracious—my lord Duke.

DUKE : We have resolved shortly to proclaim a military dictatorship in our duchy. You, instead of General Remchingen, shall direct the undertaking. Are you satisfied with that proof of our royal confidence ?

Süss : Yes, my lord Duke.

DUKE : Then give me your hand, and bear me no grudge, and serve me faithfully as heretofore.

Süss (*motionless*) : Yes, my lord Duke.

The DUKE takes his hand. A silence falls. The

DUKE seems to shiver suddenly.

DUKE : Good, good ! And now you shall drive with me to Ludwigsburg, where all can be decided. Let your uncle make preparation for the burial, at

my cost. I will myself be present at the ceremony. We will return together in two or three days ; it is not well that you should remain with your dead. I will wait for you below.

Süss : I shall be ready, my lord Duke !

The DUKE goes out.

Süss (*to the dead NAEMI*) : Did I speak fair words to him, and was not my tongue withered in my mouth ? Did I reach out my hand to him, and was it not palsied ? O Naemi, forgive, forgive ! Reproach me not that I breathed his breath and did not grind his face beneath my feet ! He would have bargained with me for your death, my daughter ! He thought that I would set a price upon the body of my child ! He would command a burial—he—for you ! And at his cost ! Oh, he shall pay ! Never was any burial so dearly paid as yours shall be ! Naemi—shall I do well ? I shall strike deep into the blackness of his soul ! I shall give him over bound to his enemies, so that they fall on him like wolves and tear his spirit from his body ! Naemi, child, shall I do well ? Will you not answer me ? Is there no presence here ? Will no candle flicker in this stillness ? (*Beginning a prayer for the dead*) Sammael, angel of Death, who standest on the right hand of the Lord Zebaoth. . . . Sleep and wait, my daughter, sleep and wait ! (*Beginning afresh*) Sammael, messenger of Death, whose wings are spread from the depths of the sea to the heights of the firma-

SCENE IV

J E W S Ü S S

ment. . . . (*As though his voice failed him.*) I cannot
pray ! I will not !

He throws himself weeping on the body.

My light ! My dove ! My daughter ! Naemi !
Sleep—and wait ! Beloved—sleep and wait !

CURTAIN

SCENE V

The throne room in the ducal castle of Ludwigsburg, a month later. It is late evening. An archway in the background leads to the ballroom, from which music is heard.

When the curtain rises WEISSENSEE is standing alone at the archway, as though watching some festivity in which he takes no part. GENERAL REMCHINGEN enters by another door, and crosses the hall without seeing him.

WEISSENSEE : Impatient as ever, General? (*The other stops abruptly and turns to him.*) But that I can well understand. On the night of your triumph—or the triumph that should be yours, eh, General?

GENERAL (*bitterly*) : Oh, you need not remind me that I am thrust aside for that accursed Jew ! I have a thousand officers and thirty thousand men in readiness, but he commands them, damn him !

WEISSENSEE (*ironically*) : What does that matter, General, since we know that yours are the brains of the plan ?

GENERAL (*mollified*) : Hum ! Yes, yes, that may be !

WEISSENSEE : If he succeeds, the credit will be yours. And if he should fail—well, you bluff soldiers are never averse from a civilian scapegoat.

GENERAL : How should the fellow fail ? The forts are garrisoned, the guns are mounted. When the word is spoken, the army will seize power.

WEISSENSEE : And what is the word, may I ask ?

GENERAL : The word is—oh, no, President ! You shall be told no tales, I promise you !

WEISSENSEE (*taunting him*) : Are you sure you know the word, General ? Are you sure it is not written in Hebrew for to-night ?

GENERAL : Damnation, do you think I am not in his Highness's confidence ? I, his old lieutenant and marshal ?

WEISSENSEE : The Duke trusts you, but he fears the Jew because he owes him more than he can pay.

GENERAL : Bah, the fellow has robbed him like a shark !

WEISSENSEE : There are other debts than those of money. The Duke is paying one of them, and scowling, cursing as he pays. How we hate those whom we have injured, General !

GENERAL (*staring at him*) : Eh ?

WEISSENSEE : Life binds those two together, and they cannot part even if they will. Once there was only one best-hated man in the duchy ; now there are two. Have you heard that their effigies are burned together in the streets ?

GENERAL : I have even seen it !

The DUCHESS enters from the ballroom, with the ENGLISH LORD in attendance.

DUCHESS (*joining them*) : More grave faces, gentle-

men? It seems as though you had all grown old and withered overnight. Our Süß especially.

GENERAL : I care not how soon *he* withers !

DUCHESS : I hear that all the ladies are complaining of our Treasurer's coldness. Thanks to his gallantry, they are the first to see the change in him—and to regret it.

GENERAL : Well, it is high time Christian lovers had their turn !

DUCHESS (*with her lazy smile*) : If their turn is not past, General ! (*To the ENGLISHMAN*) Come, Milord !

She and the ENGLISH LORD, accompanied by WEISSENSEE, move on towards another doorway, where they stand in a group apart. The GENERAL remains standing alone. The DUKE enters from the background with Süß, who seems to have aged and grown more Jewish in appearance.

DUKE : The courier ! Where is the courier with my despatch ? I have stood on fifty battlefields and waited coolly for the issue ; but to-night my blood is running fire. And you, Süß—are you so calm ?

Süß : All is ready, my lord Duke, and I know I *must* succeed.

DUKE : Where is my courier ? I shall breathe again as I have never breathed before, when once I know that rebel pack is under lock and key ! Never have I hated a Turk or a Frenchman in the field—no, not when they shot my old charger from under my seat—as I hate these dregs of Parliament ! Where can that courier be ?

SÜSS : Do not fret yourself, my lord Duke. The night is stormy, the roads are bad ; nothing else delays our messenger.

DUKE : Ah, Süß, if I had your calm ! The plan is yours, in all its strength, all its simplicity !

GENERAL (*growling*) : The army is yours, brother Duke !

DUKE : But *his* eye sees the whole, and his hands directs. Let them curse you, Süß, let them curse us both together, but I need you still ! To-night I understand how much I need you !

SÜSS : And when my task is done, my lord Duke ?

DUKE (*with sudden cunning*) : Do you think I shall be ungrateful, hey ? Do you expect to read your name in the list for my dungeons ?

SÜSS (*impassive*) : Not yet, my lord Duke.

DUKE (*uneasily*) : “ My lord Duke, my lord Duke.” You are too humble, Süß. You should call me brother Duke, like our General here. Come, call me brother Duke, since I no longer call you Jew !

SÜSS : I am not your General, my lord Duke.

DUKE : Then come and drink with me. I have a royal Tokay—which is to say as good a wine as yours. That I have tried, and I know.

SÜSS : I shall drink afterwards, my lord Duke.

DUKE : Come, brother General, we must leave the fellow to himself. You shall set a light to the fire-works. And Graziella shall give the signal for the bells to peal. Where is the wench ? Graziella, Graziella !

The DUCHESS and the ENGLISH LORD have gone out together, leaving WEISSENSEE behind. The DUKE hobbles after them, and the GENERAL follows him.

WEISSENSEE approaches SÜSS.

WEISSENSEE : This is a great day for you, Excellency.

SÜSS : Yes, President, it is a great day for me.

WEISSENSEE : Do you see that his Highness takes more pleasure in humbling Parliament than in enlarging his own power ?

SÜSS : Yes, President, I see that.

WEISSENSEE : A primitive impulse, old as our hills and forests. The passion of revenge !

SÜSS : Yes—a primitive impulse !

WEISSENSEE (*with a shrug*) : A sentiment natural to betrayed wenches, useful to writers of comedies, but scarcely proper to a Sovereign in the age of Louis Quinze.

SÜSS : Twelve paces ! Every heart-beat brings him twelve paces nearer !

WEISSENSEE : Whom, Excellency ?

SÜSS : The courier—with our despatch !

WEISSENSEE : It seems you are as eager as the Duke to greet this messenger ?

SÜSS : Is that so strange to you ?

WEISSENSEE : All is strange to a looker-on—which means that nothing is strange.

SÜSS : Not even suffering—such as mine !

WEISSENSEE (*uneasily at first, then with sudden sincerity*) : Süss, you should reproach me if I have wronged you.

I brought the Duke to your house that day, it is true ; but who could foresee the calamity that followed ? Believe me, I have regretted it deeply. And when I think of you as the man you were, and see the man you are to-day——

SÜSS (*silencing him with a gesture, then speaking as if he had not heard him*) : Tell me, President, is *your* daughter here to-night ?

WEISSENSEE : Yes, she is here. She is another who waits and watches for what will befall.

SÜSS : She will see—her destiny fulfilled !

WEISSENSEE (*as though trying to read his face*) : Süß, is it possible that you—that you, too, share this passion of revenge ?

SÜSS : And why not ?

WEISSENSEE (*shrinking from him*) : Revenge ? But then—for him and you—for her—for all of us—— !

SÜSS : Twelve paces, President ! Twelve paces nearer !

WEISSENSEE : Great God, what have you done ?

SÜSS : What cannot and shall not be undone.

MAGDALEN *appears at a doorway.*

WEISSENSEE (*lowering his voice*) : Do you not fear that I shall speak ?

SÜSS : You fear life too much for that.

WEISSENSEE *goes out, and MAGDALEN comes forward.*

MAGDALEN : You know the watchword ? I obtained it yesterday—by what means, do not ask me !

SÜSS : The watchword is *Attempto*—I dare !

MAGDALEN : And it is yours too, my friend ?

SÜSS : Yes, Magdalen, it is mine too. His and mine and yours. Life has set the price on our surrenders, has it not ?

MAGDALEN : On yours as well—I know it now !

SÜSS : We gave ourselves, and now we give no longer. We demand—we dare ! Our messenger comes riding through the night—do you hear his hoof-beats ? through storm and spattering mud—a letter in his breast ! Two paltry lines, and a dukedom and an army are in tatters ! Two lines, and you and I dance together on the wreck of power ! A prince's, and our own !

MAGDALEN (*coming closer*) : Have I served you faithfully, Josef ?

SÜSS (*scarcely heeding her*) : Yes, Magdalen, you have served me faithfully.

MAGDALEN : And have you nothing more to say to me ? (*He is silent.*) Josef, it is for you that I have done this thing ! For you ! Revenge is not enough for me.

SÜSS (*bitterly*) : Nor for me either, God help me ! Revenge is not enough.

MAGDALEN : Josef, you know that I love you ! You set your will in place of mine. You gave me your own strength ; must you take it from me now ? Oh, if I could undo this thing that I have done ! It brings you no nearer to me ! Your face is strange, and your eyes make me afraid.

SÜSS : The world has changed for both of us, Magdalen. While the passion was in me, I was content to strike. Revenge was enough ! But already, before it is accomplished, I see that it is vain. What comes now, must come. I look beyond it. The world of sense and power is left behind.

MAGDALEN : Then do you wish to die, Josef ?

SÜSS : I no longer wish. I see and know !

MAGDALEN : O God, what is left to me ? Your dreams of power are dead, but my love is living still !

SÜSS (*gently*) : I would give you my heart for it if I could. But you are the one woman I have never touched, and I will not lie to you.

MAGDALEN : I ask only that you shall live—for both our sakes. Live without me, live as a beggar, live as a monk if you will, but let me only know that you are in this world of mine ! Live, Josef, live !

SÜSS : I hear you cry to me, but the gates of my spirit are shut, and words cannot open them.

MAGDALEN : You have only to speak one word, and no one will lay a hand upon you. One word—your father's name !

SÜSS : You know it will not be spoken. Because I am Jew, I will not haggle any more.

MAGDALEN (*embracing him*) : Ah, Josef, Josef !

SÜSS (*kissing her, then putting her gentle away*) : Farewell, Magdalen.

MAGDALEN : Farewell, Josef !

She goes out. The DUKE enters from another doorway. In the background appear the DUCHESS, the

ENGLISH LORD, DOM BARTELEMY, GRAZIELLA,
and courtiers.

DUKE : No fireworks will burn in this cursed storm ! The rain has soaked them ! We must fire a salvo instead, while all the towers of Ludwigsburg make music !

DUCHESS (*coming forward*) : I see you are resolved to split our ears, my lord !

DUKE : More than your pretty ears, my darling ! A Duchy and a Parliament ! A Constitution and a Charter ! Am I not right, Jew ?

SÜSS : You are right, my lord Duke !

DOM BARTELEMY (*at Süß's elbow*) : I see your Excellency still wears the *solitaire* upon your finger ?

DUCHESS : Yes, Dom Bartelemy, your castle is still there—and safe for the present.

DOM BARTELEMY : But I shall have it yet !

DUKE (*restless*) : That rogue of a courier shall go on bread and water for a month. Two hours past midnight, and no news ! Two hours since all the rump of renegades were clapped in gaol—and still no news !

The GENERAL enters in haste.

GENERAL : The Stuttgart courier is here ! The guard is mounted ! He rides into the courtyard !

DUKE : Ah ! Bid all my guests assemble ! The bells and cannon—when I give the signal, not before ! Silence that music ; fetch all the company ! Ah, Heaven be praised ! I render thanks as for a battle won !

The guests begin to enter and the DUKE beckons SÜSS to a place at his right hand. Near by stand the GENERAL and WEISSENSEE ; and near the DUCHESS, GRAZIELLA. The courier appears.

COURIER : Privy Messenger Von Kraus. Urgent news from Stuttgart, for your Highness's royal hand.

He bends on one knee and proffers his despatch.

SÜSS takes it and hands it to the DUKE.

DUKE (*to the COURIER*) : We thank you, and forgive your tardiness. (*To the assembling guests*) Come, my lords, ladies and gentlemen, for we have news for you, joyful tidings that will be heard throughout Europe !

The COURIER withdraws. The guests have now gathered in a semi-circle on the right of the throne.

There is silence in the crowded hall.

By God's grace we are resolved to end the conspiracies of our faithless deputies ! We resume to our royal person all the rights of which they have defrauded us ! We answer their treachery by force of arms ! We have chosen the watchword of our great ancestor, Count Eberhard : *Attempto !*—I dare ! We proclaim the dissolution of the Parliament in this our duchy, and forbid its further assembly, and pronounce its decrees null and void ! Our loyal army has been ordered to assume power on our behalf ! And here in my hand is a despatch announcing—— (*He tears open the despatch and reads*) “ The citizens have risen—they hold Stuttgart—your troops outnumbered——” (*The blood seems to rise*

to his head. *He lets the paper fall, stammers and gurgles.*) Ah! Ah! Who—who has done this? (*His eyes move slowly round to Süß.*) Who has betrayed me? Jew—are you—the Judas?

SÜß : Yes, my lord Duke !

DUKE : You ! (*Choking.*) You ! Judas ! Judas ! (*A silence, broken by a salvo.*) My guns—who gave the signal ?

SÜß (*triumphantly*) : I, my lord Duke !

DUKE : You ? You——?

The DUKE collapses in the chair behind him. The silvery scream of the DUCHESS is heard. Süß, impassive, turns his back upon the scene and walks away.

GENERAL (*bending over the DUKE*) : God—what is this ? A stroke ?

DUCHESS : A doctor ! Call a doctor !

Some of the courtiers hurry off.

GRAZIELLA : Oh, poor Duke, poor Duke !

GENERAL (*to WEISSENSEE*) : Clear the room ! Guard the doors !

At a signal from WEISSENSEE, the remaining ladies and gentlemen are hastily ushered out by footmen, who take post at the doorways. WEISSENSEE comes to the DUCHESS, who stands staring at the DUKE's form.

WEISSENSEE : Highness, I beg you also to withdraw for the present. When the doctor comes, we will convey him to his apartments—— Rest assured that all will be done——

He has escorted her to the door, and returns. The GENERAL remains near the DUKE, with one or two of the Court who are supporting him. Süß, forgotten, sits alone and apart.

GENERAL (to WEISSENSEE) : Read me that despatch !

WEISSENSEE (*picking up the despatch, reads*) : " The citizens have risen—they hold Stuttgart—your troops outnumbered—the militia is marching on Ludwigsburg—their watchword is——"

DUKE (*groaning*) : *Attempto ! Attempto !*

He falls back. The GENERAL and attendants loosen his uniform. WEISSENSEE is standing with the despatch in hand, staring at Süß.

WEISSENSEE (*pointing to the dying man*) : Excellency—have you no word ?

SÜß (*looking before him*) : My word was on his lips. My word is dead.

The COURT PHYSICIAN hurries in, important, with one or two gentlemen. He bends over the DUKE.

PHYSICIAN : His Highness must be bled immediately. Move him—gently.

GENERAL : This way, this way !

The DUKE is carried into the room in the background, and all follow except Süß. WEISSENSEE draws the curtains of the archway as he goes.

SÜß (*alone*) : Naemi, child, have I done well or ill ? I have done ill.

He sits huddled in a chair. An old COURT SERVANT enters carrying a long-handled snuffer.

SERVANT : Jesus ! (*He pronounces it "Yessus."*)
His Excellency the Treasurer !

SÜSS (*looking up*) : Who is there ?

SERVANT : Johann, Excellency. Come to put out the lights.

SÜSS : Put out the lights ? Why not ? Yes, yes, put out the lights.

SERVANT (*about to comply*) : The Duke ! My poor master !

SÜSS : " Put not thy trust in princes." Is not that written in your Bible, old man ?

SERVANT (*turning to him*) : Excellency ?

SÜSS : Nor in their servants. Nor in their servants.

The curtains are parted, and WEISSENSEE enters.

WEISSENSEE (*to the SERVANT, abruptly*) : What are you doing here ? Leave us !

The SERVANT goes off.

SÜSS ! The Duke is dead !

SÜSS nods without answering. WEISSENSEE makes sure that no one overhears him, then comes closer.

That was your masterstroke ! Magnificent—sublime !

SÜSS : My—masterstroke ?

WEISSENSEE : All the duchy, except the Court, was longing to be rid of him. You saw your opportunity, and now—who knows ? You may be the hero of the hour.

SÜSS (*staring at him*) : I ?

WEISSENSEE : The Parliamentary troops are almost

at the gates. You are on their side, of course? You will take charge under the new *régime*?

Süss *breaks into harsh, loud laughter.*

Excellency—are you mad?

Süss: Not I! Only that world of yours—that world!

The GENERAL and an OFFICER enter.

GENERAL (*blustering*): What is this laughter? Do you not know his Highness is dead?

Süss (*seated, motionless*): I know it, gentlemen.

GENERAL: And you are his murderer!

Süss (*rising*): Yes! His murderer!

They stare at one another, unable to believe their ears.

GENERAL: Do you confess it, then?

Süss: I confess it!

WEISSENSEE: Süss, I implore you to consider—it is not the moment—this is a hanging matter——

The officers stand confused, whispering.

Süss: Have I puzzled you, gentlemen? Your task is simple. Arrest me, and then you are safe. Offer me to those troops who march against you—offer them a willing sacrifice!

GENERAL (*boldly*): Then in the name of the Constitution, I arrest you, Jew! (*He turns to the OFFICER.*) Summon the guard! (*In the OFFICER's ear*) And say—the Jew confesses! The Jew proclaims himself a murderer and a traitor!

The OFFICER goes out.

WEISSENSEE (*bitterly, as if to himself*): Thou hast conquered, O Judæan, thou hast conquered!

Süss (*standing alone, speaks softly*) : This life is but a straining after breath. One and eternal is the Lord of Israel, Adonai, the everlasting, the infinite.

A Corporal and two soldiers appear. As Süss turns to go out with them, murmurs of execration are heard from the crowd of courtiers outside ; and a howl arises as they reach the doorway. Above the shouting, a roll of drums.

THE END

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